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Toy Smiths

Completing the Thief

A Preview of the Complete Thief Manual

by John Nephew

The basic AD&D® 2nd Edition game rulebooks, the *Dungeon Master's Guide* and *Player's Handbook,* are designed to be complete. They contain all the core rules you need to run a campaign. But as years of supplements and articles in publications such as DRAGON® Magazine and POLYHEDRON™ Newszine have demonstrated, there's a lot of room for expansion of those rules.

The "complete manuals" will start appearing later this year, one for each of the four basic character classes. I am one of three writers working on the thief manual (the others are Doug Niles and Carl Sergent). I am writing this article to share with other Network members an overview of what the *Complete Thief Manual,* due in December, will contain.

The topic, of course, is thieves. (Originally it was going to be rogues, including bards, but the bard material has been dropped.) The book will cover a lot of ground, filling 128 pages. Included is information on role-playing thieves (where did the character come from? Why is he a thief?), thief kits, new nonweapon proficiencies, new rules and expansions of old ones for sundry thiefly activities, thieves' guilds, new equipment, and ideas for running a campaign centered on thieves.

What are Thief Kits?

Kits are a way of designing character *types*—specialists within the class, but not classes unto themselves.

Thieves are many and varied, especially in cities, where most thieves live in a complex society of their own, with many different roles to fill. The core thief rules already are more flexible than the old AD&D game thief rules because players can distribute their thief character's percentage points among the abilites as they see fit. This means a player can custom-tailor a thief character on his own—making the character an expert at opening locks, picking pockets, or whatever.

The thief kits provide templates for different sorts of thieves. Besides advice on how to distribute percentage points among the thief skills, a kit contains nonweapon proficiency information, bonus proficiencies, other special abilities, and special hinderances that balance the whole package.

A kit is, strictly speaking, the written guidelines for a specific kind of thief. It contains the following (as of this writing in late July; specifics may change as more material is written and edited):

Description: A brief summary of what this sort of thief is and does.
Role: How the thief fits into the world, both among people in general and among other thieves. A fence, for instance, has a special role in the criminal underworld.
Legal Issues: An overview of the laws against the thief's special activities and punishments that typically are meted out. These are garnered from literature and history.
Secondary Skills: If the campaign uses the secondary skills system, thieves of certain kits may be limited in what skills they can have.
Weapon Proficiencies: Some thieves are required to take proficiencies in certain weapons.
Nonweapon Proficiencies: This includes proficiencies that are required, bonus proficiencies the thief can add at first level, and additional proficiencies that are recommended. Nonweapon proficiencies are optional, but we recommend that you use them if you use thief kits.
Skill Progression: Suggestions on how a thief of this kit ought to distribute the points he gains with experience levels among his thief skills are listed.
Equipment: A survey of any special equipment this type of thief might need.
Special Benefits: Special abilities for thieves of this kit.
Special Hindrances: What weaknesses this type of thief has.
Races: Notes about this kit when applied to non-human characters. Dwarf acrobats, for instance, are listed as a combination that is not recommended.

As of this writing, the kits that will be offered are: Acrobat, Adventurer, Assassin, Bandit, Beastmaster, Beggar, Bounty Hunter, Buccaneer, Cat Burglar, Cutpurse, Fence, Investigator, Scout, Smuggler, Spy, Swashbuckler, Swindler, Thug, and Troubleshooter.

Nonweapon Proficiencies

Many new nonweapon proficiencies will be presented in the *Complete Thief Manual.* Some of these, such as alertness and boating, come from the old *Survival Guides.* Others are entirely new.

One of the new proficiencies, *observation,* is described below. While it is recommended for most thieves, it's not really a specialized thief talent. For this reason, the DM might wish to consider it a general proficiency — open to any character at normal "cost."

Observation

Fills one slot; check vs. Intelligence with no modifier.
Required for the following kits: Scout, Spy, Troubleshooter.
Recommended for the following kits: Assassin, Bounty Hunter, Cat Burglar, Cutpurse, Fence, Smuggler, Swindler.

Characters with this proficiency have cultivated acute powers of observation. The DM may ask for a proficiency check (or secretly roll it himself) any time the character encounters something subtle; he also may allow characters with this proficiency to have a 1-in-6 better chance at finding secret or concealed doors. The proficiency covers all the senses.

Example: Julina the Silent, spy extraordinaire, is questioning a man. He claims to be a craftsman who has worked on the Imperial Palace, which Julina means to infiltrate by the most discreet entrance. The DM secretly rolls an observation proficiency check. It is successful. The DM tells the player, "Julina notices that the man's hands are in beautiful condition and have no callouses at all." From this observation Julina might deduce that the man is actually just posing as a craftsman. He might be a con man taking advantage of a few drinks or coins in exchange for a few lies, or he could be a spy for her enemies.

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About the Cover

Gunder and Relvan Geawilder distribute their surplus toys on the streets of Ravens Bluff. Art by Jeff Easley.

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Mutant Materials

Minerals for Science Fiction Games

by Kim Eastland

Science fiction games are often filled with strange and mutated plants and animals. But those worlds could hold more mutations—perhaps in the very earth itself. The following mutated minerals and ores are presented for use with the GAMMA WORLD® game, but easily could be used in almost any science fiction or fantasy role-playing game.

On Gamma World, and perhaps on other planets in different game systems, man and mutantkind are just now discovering ways to use these materials for improved weapons and items.

Some sages believe there are many more undiscovered metals that also could be beneficial, and still others could be evolving at an unbelievable pace. Sages speculate that metal creatures could soon rise out of the earth and ravage the lands or claim them as their own.

Player characters could spend entire adventures in pursuit of the metals.

Brilliant Metal This is a phosophorescent metal virus that impregnates veins of iron ore. Weapons or items made from the infected iron always emit a dim glow in the dark, providing light in a five-meter radius. But the real worth of a brilliant metal weapon is discovered when a character fights with it in full sunlight or the equivalent artificial light. The metal is so shiny it flashes and reflects as if it were an alien energy weapon. The reflection is so distracting that anyone meleeing the weapon holder does so at a −3CS. Cost per .5 kg = (400)

Focustryals A mutant gemstone, focustryals are found in many different shades, shapes, and sizes. They do not have a life of their own, but they enhance mutations in living things by increasing Mutation Scores by +1. Focustryals work with mutations that channel, emit, or somehow use energy, such as hands of power, energy blasts, energy generations, dark or light creation or manipulation, sonic attacks, force fields that affect physical or energy attacks, static or silence fields, and the like.

Each focustryal also has a specific mutation that it works best with, adding a 1+1d4 to the Mutation Score. The amount of increase and type of specific mutation that can be improved by a focustryal should be determined by the GM before the focustryal is discovered by the party. To use a focustryal, a character must hold it or tie it to the area of his or her body where a mutation's energy is released.

Friendly Material This is a sentient organism with metallic properties. It is of unknown origins, and sages speculate that it might have been introduced to Gamma World by alien invaders.

The organism can befriend characters, although an organism usually becomes attached to one individual. A favorable roll on the Reaction Tables determines if an organism befriends a player character. It is possible to encounter organisms which are lost from their chosen friends or which have been left alone because their friends died.

After friendly material has befriended a character, it will stay with him or her, turning into any shape desired by the character within its weight allowance. Friendly material weighs from .5 to 2.5 kilograms, and thus can appear as hats, clasps, or equipment. A befriended character thinks about the shape he or she wants the friendly material to assume, and the friendly material complies instantly.

Friendly material communicates telepathically, but only with its chosen friend. The organism is an atmovore, and therefore does not need food or water.

Friendly material only wishes to be treated well and appreciated. Some chosen friends believe that their "friendlies" love them, and, in trying to please, are easily loved in return. No one would ever sell a friendly, unless it is masquerading as an object to escape an abusive chosen friend.

Speculum Metal Speculum is an extremely rare metal that is hammered paper-thin and layered over other metal. It has remarkable reflective properties that are obvious at a glance.

A melee weapon covered with speculum has special properties when swung in daylight or the artificial equivalent. A second, physical reflection of the melee weapon appears and strikes the target. This second attack, called a "light shadow," is an actual force that can cause damage. The light shadow weapon strikes almost immediately, but at half the Attack Rank of the weapon's wielder and causing only the normal weapon's base damage. No PS, DX, or other modifiers are included. Cost per weapon = ((2000))

Vibrum Metal Vibrum is a mineable metal. It always vibrates slightly and is used in alloys with other metals. It is soft and cannot be used alone. These alloyed metals are rarely uniform, differing based on the combination of materials used, amount of vibrum used, and the alloying process. However, all vibrum alloys are black. Further, when the alloyed metal is used in the construction of a weapon, the weapon either causes additional base damage points (+1d4 points, a positive Column Shift for hitting with the weapon (+1d6 CS), or both. All vibrum weapons weigh half what their regularly-constructed counterparts would. Cost per .2 kg = (1000)

Werze Material Also called "earthcore," this is mined by the Sarbis (see the GAMMA WORLD game module, *Gamma Base*, for a description of these aardvark-humanoids). The material is considered unique and only can be found in the Desperate Lands. It looks like natural rock, but is worked like metal.

Werze is the bane of all lycanthropes, vampires, and "undead" mutants. This also includes Gamma World monsters that have appeared in DRAGON® Magazine and any other classic monsters created by the GM. Werze weapons not only fully effect these creatures, which tend to be invulnerable to normal melee weapons, but they cause double damage. The process of making a werze weapon is a closely guarded secret. Cost per 1 kg = (3000) ❑

Notes From HQ

Landmarks, The Game Fair, and The Missing

The 50th issue of any publication is special, and here at HQ we consider this 50th issue more special than most. To celebrate we added a full-color cover and eight more pages.

The first issue of the POLYHEDRON™ Newszine was released in the summer of 1981. It had 16 pages and featured articles on the BOOT HILL® game, GAMMA WORLD® game, and the Fight in the Skies™ game. It also used part of a page to list the names of tournament winners. We run too many tournaments now to list winners; it likely would take up half the magazine. The POLYHEDRON Newszine was initially a black-and-white quarterly publication. The Newszine now sports a second color each issue and is double the original size.

We're happy the Network members have approved of the changes. At this GEN CON® Game Fair the Newszine received the Gamers' Choice Award for Best Professional Gaming Magazine. This is the second year in a row we've captured the award, and the Newszine staff is very proud of the award and of the fact that the gaming public recognizes the Newszine's quality.

The Newszine's past was rocky at times, and issues often were late. I remember when I started work as Network Coordinator in late March, 1987. At that time the Newszine, a bi-monthly, was several issues behind—it was not a good situation to walk into. Because GEN CON Game Fair was so near and TSR, Inc.'s typesetting department already busy with a myriad of products, we were not able to start pushing POLYHEDRON Newszines out the door until after the Game Fair, when the Newszine was seven issues off schedule. Skip Williams, now associate editor of the Newszine, and myself, with a little help from Anne Gray McCready, Barbara Young, and Robin Jenkins, feverishly edited the late issues. And by January, 1988, the Newszine was up to date. It has not fallen behind since then, and the current editorial staff will not permit it to get off schedule.

We've done more than set the schedule right. We created an introductory issue, which is put in the kits of all new members and is available to members who have been around awhile. We also produced *Gateway To Ravens Bluff, The Living City,* a 64-page product written by Network members. Both of these products can be ordered using the form on the mailer cover of this issue. And there's more in the works. If enough people order *Gateway To Ravens Bluff* we'll have the funds to produce more products. Let us know what you would like to see.

Perhaps a bigger landmark than the Newszine's 50th issue is the anniversary of the Network itself. In 1990 the Network marks its 10th year, and we're planning contests and special events to celebrate.

The first contest to kick off the celebration is a membership drive which will be revealed in POLYHEDRON Newszine #51.

The Network and The Game Fair

We sponsored about three dozen tournaments at this past GEN CON Game Fair at MECCA in Milwaukee, WI. In addition, we sanctioned more than a dozen seminars by Peter Rice and John Wheeler, sponsored an international tournament for gamers attending from other countries, and oversaw the convention's masquerade, art show, and at the last minute the miniatures painting contest.

Gateway To Ravens Bluff premiered at the Game Fair and was quickly being snapped up at the GEN CON Game Fair/RPGA™ Network Sales Booth. Another first for the Network were seminars on The Living City and the Network in general; the latter was for non-members interested in joining. The seminars were well attended, and we're planning on offering them again next year.

A highlight of the Game Fair was *The Lost Chord,* our tournament to benefit the literacy programs of the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee. The total donation was $1,000 generated from tournament entry fees, an auction for autographed books, and a contribution from TSR, Inc.

Continued on the next page

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POLYHEDRON Newszine welcomes unsolicited submissions of written material and artwork. No responsibility for such submissions can be assumed by the publisher in any event. No submissions will be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope of sufficient size.

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RPGA™ Network Service Awards were presented to the following members:

Malcolm Wood, Martha McCray, Carl Buehler, Steve Glimpse, John Manning, Tom Prusa, Walt Baas, Gary Haynes, Jim Lowder, Linda Bingle, Kevin Melka, Jose deHartvig, and Bill Sherman.

Network Merit Awards were presented to Wes Nicholson of Australia for promoting the Network in his country, and to Peter Hague who won the 1988 Network Membership Drive.

The Gamers' Choice Awards presented for 1989 were:

Best Family Game:
Mertwig's Maze by TSR, Inc.
Best Satirical Role Playing Game:
Macho Women With Guns by Blacksburg Tactical Research Center
Best Fantasy Game:
Gurps, Third Edition by Steve Jackson Games
Best Science Fiction Role Playing Game:
Cyberpunk by R. Talsorian Games
Best Other Category Role Playing Game:
Bullwinkle and Rocky by TSR, Inc.
Best Role Playing Adventure:
Castle Greyhawk by TSR, Inc.
Best Role-Playing Accessory:
Lords of Darkness by TSR, Inc. and *Kara-Tur Boxed Set* by TSR, Inc.
Best Historical Strategy Game:
The Hunt For Red October by TSR, Inc.
Best Science Fiction Strategy Game:
Buck Rogers by TSR, Inc. and *Merchant of Venus* by Avalon Hill
Best Miniature Line:
AD&D® game series by Ral Partha
Best Computer Game:
Pool of Radiance by SSI, Inc.
Best Play-By-Mail Game:
Heroic Fantasy by Flying Buffalo
Best Professional Gaming Magazine:
POLYHEDRON™ Newszine by TSR, Inc.
Best RPGA™ Network Tournament:
Scrap Of Paper by Skip Williams and Jean Rabe

Event coordinators for the game fair are to be commended. They are: Cheryl Frech, Norm Ritchie, Tom Prusa, Skip Williams, Al Boyce, Greg Swedberg, Steve Hardinger, Kevin Melka, Tracy Reed, Janice Ours, Dennis Everett, Robert Farnsworth, Rick Reid, Randall Lemon, Ed Peterson, Jim Wade, Martha McCray, Jay Tummelson, Bob Etheridge, Terry Cletcher, Steve Null, Rich Bingle, Don Bingle, Linda Bingle, Ruel Lacsam, Michael Weaver, Calvin Stengel, Gary Hamlin, Randolph Strommen, Mark Wallace, Toni Cobb, Mike Vetrovec, Erick Wujcik, James Shipman, Lisa Stevens, and Rich Brewer.

Many of those coordinators also authored tournaments for the Game Fair.

Marshals for the Game Fair, who spent hours matching players and judges for all our events, were: Mike Selinker, Bill Sherman, Paul Magee, Jeri McGraw, and Bob McGraw.

HQ personnel were Skip Williams, Chris Schon, Greg Schwartz, Mik Pendleton, Tim Beach, Todd Keyser, Peter Hague, and myself.

Members Liz and Gary Williams were in charge of the art show, which was the biggest yet, attracting about 40 artists who appeared in person and another dozen who sent in their work to be displayed.

Member Rembert Parker once again took charge of the masquerade, which was filled with adventurers, robots, a few drow, and a klingon.

So very many people deserve to be thanked for assisting with the convention that there just isn't space for them all: the tournament authors, members who came into HQ after each session and helped with the paperwork, volunteers who helped man the Network Sales Booth, members who agreed to run tournaments at the last minute because there were players with generic tickets wanting to play in Network events. Without these people's efforts the Network wouldn't have shone quite so brightly at the Game Fair.

Renewals and Missing Persons

Several members have been complaining that they are not receiving renewal notices. We send out two renewal notices (you only receive the second notice if you don't renew by a certain date).

The renewal notices are blue and white. They're not very attractive and they don't have the Network logo on the outside. When these forms run out we will be having new ones printed with the Network logo so you can quickly tell what they are. If you receive POLYHEDRON Newszines, you should be receiving the renewal notices—they all go to the address we have listed for you. To help you remember when to renew before you get a notice, we list each member's Network expiration date on each Newszine's mailing label.

If you are moving, please send us a change of address notice as soon as possible. POLYHEDRON Newszines go by bulk mail, and they are not forwarded unless you let the post office know that you want all your magazines forwarded.

That leads us to our next point. The following members are no longer at the addresses we have listed for them. If you know these gamers, please contact them and tell them to get in touch with HQ.

Robert Elsermans, Brabant Sterrebeek, Peter Botond, Andre Parent, Patty Michael, Gary McClain, Leo Doms, Masataka Ohta, Chris Morrice, Matthew Christopher, and Patric Lager.

Dreaded Deadlines

If you wish to have a tournament considered for ORIGINS or GEN CON Game Fair 1990, send them to HQ by January 31, 1990. Of course, we are always eager to accept tournaments at any time, as there is an increasing demand for Network events at conventions throughout the world.

A Brief Lecture

The Network tries to provide tournaments for every convention that requests them. However, we *really* do need enough lead time to handle the requests. I know I've covered this topic in *Notes From HQ* before, but here it comes (at least) one more time.

Because we send tournaments to more than 100 conventions a year, we need several months advance notice on tournament requests so we can consult our records and plan which conventions receive which tournaments. Unless we are tapped out on tournaments, this keeps us from scheduling the same tournament at neighboring conventions.

We prefer getting tournament requests six months in advance of conventions. We know this is possible as few conventions are planned in less than six months. We also want convention announcements this far in advance to meet our press schedule. End of lecture.

Take Care,

Jean ❑

Letters

Tournament Blues

Seeing the number of Network events scheduled for the GEN CON® Game Fair this year, I was frustrated to see that there were many which were open to everyone. While I agree that the AD&D® game Open tournament should be open to all, I think other tournaments should be restricted to members. Network tournaments are one of the benefits of membership. Why should non-members get to enjoy that benefit?

Aaron Goldblatt
Fort Worth, TX

Network tournaments are open to non-members as a recruiting tool. HQ hopes that non-members who play in and enjoy Network events will want to play again, and that if they play in enough sanctioned tournaments they will eventually want to become members to qualify for Masters and Grand Masters events.

However, HQ is looking at ways to increase the return from tournaments, and we are considering reviving an old policy. Under this policy, a non-member who wins a prize of less than $10.00 would get nothing; if the prize is $10.00 or more the winner gets a one-year membership instead. Members who win tournaments would continue to receive gift certificates. This policy, HQ hopes, will earn the Network more new members from sanctioned events. What does the membership think? Write and let us know.

James Wade gave an excellent breakdown of the Network voting system in issue #48. To stimulate more discussion, I'd like to share my personal experiences.

Role-playing games allow for a great deal of creativity and problem solving, and this aspect of role-playing games attracts me the most. Unfortunately, Network tournaments are seldom written with tactics, strategies, and problem solving in mind. Most scenarios have good story lines, but they are just a series of role-playing encounters that don't promote intelligent play. I have written tournaments for the Network, and I have tried to reward intelligent play. I encourage all authors to offer players opportunities to show their creativity and problem solving abilities.

Besides scenarios that don't encourage good play, I have witnessed player actions and voting that can only be described as "bewildering" considering good strategic sense. For example, in the final round of a Masters tournament the party was required to sneak into a castle and investigate the interior. The bewildering actions came from the tournament's first place winner.

As we crept along the castle's halls hoping to avoid detection, this player decided to have his character shout the time of day at the top of his lungs. You see, the character was the town crier and shouting the time was his job. I was aghast—surely this would doom the party. No. The DM simply overlooked it, several times. I enjoy acting out personalities in tournaments, but I insist it be done intelligently. In contrast, the third place finisher used creative role-playing to parley the party out of danger. Well done. I encourage Network members to carefully consider each player's actions—not just acting performance—at voting time.

Rules knowledge is not in demand in Network tournaments. I have seen a person who never played the game receive second place in a three-round AD&D® game tournament. The scenario did not call for any rules knowledge. It is my fondest wish to play in a Network AD&D game event that challenges my mediocre rules knowledge.

Members should consider rules knowledge more carefully when voting. In the "bewildering" Masters event, the first place finisher's character was killed when a red dragon used its breath weapon the fourth time. The third place finisher, the one who helped the party with a skillful parley, once again helped the party. He knew something was wrong when that fourth breath came. The player attempted to disbelieve the dragon, and—yes—it was an illusion. I hope similar performances will earn more consideration during voting than this fine player got.

It is your voting system, Network members. It is not the voting system of the gaming elite. The results are the product of the membership's collective will. If we don't like the results, we can change it. Each member should carefully determine what voting criteria are most important. Do you value role-playing (as it's commonly defined today) above all? Do you hold two or three equal? Or, should all aspects be weighed equally? Decide. Then cast *your* vote.

At the risk of sounding crass, I would like to end on this note: I am the only person to have received a first place in the first two AD&D game Masters events held. In my opinion, good strategic sense and rules knowledge had absolutely nothing the do with those victories.

How much more would the honor mean if a complete effort was demanded?

A great deal more.

Jeff Martin
Carbondale, IL

It seems that a Newszine article is in order here. How does a tournament author write a tournament to provide opportunities for good play or to test rules knowledge? How about it, Jeff?

There are members who would argue with you about who should have won the "bewildering" Masters round, but you are right about the voting system. The players decide who wins. Who you vote for is up to you. Do you want to give the laurels to the biggest ham? Fine. Do you want to reward the sharp-witted, quick-thinking player? Fine. Do you want to recognize the newcomer who performs well despite his unfamiliarity with the rules? That's fine, too. But remember, when one style of play wins a tournament it is going to show up again. And when one style of play starts winning consistantly that style will *become the norm for many Network tournaments.* ❑

Fun In Games

A Turkey Of A Game

by Rick Reid

I want to do something a little different this time. Instead of my rambling on for an entire column, I'm going to let some of you do the rambling.

Letters To Fun In Games

These are only a few of the interesting letters received at the ol' Fun In Games Corral. I had to do a little editing because of space limitations. Our first missive comes from John "JT" Terra.

I have read with much interest your columns about using food as props in RPGs, and I think I may have come up with the most versatile prop yet, one that will be especially plentiful in November and December. May I present—the humble Turkey Carcass!

Yes, that's right, Turkey Carcass! Such a sad sight, the holiday's over, the poor thing picked clean, with only shreds of barely recognizable flesh hanging limply off the splayed bones. Check out these uses in not one, but many, game systems:

The AD&D® game: (The DM speaks) "Okay, you're going down a corridor and 90' ahead you hear a rhythmic chanting. Approaching the sound, you see a vast temple with dozens of lizard creatures worshipping—THIS!" (DM plunks hidden Turkey Carcass in front of the players' miniatures.) "As you watch in horror it starts moving toward you." (DM begins sliding Turkey Carcass menancingly toward figures.) "It Attacks!" (Take random figures and pop them into open gullet while players scream in horror.)

Or, what about this:

Star Trek: "Captain's Log, Stardate 2/2503.23. We are currently going where no one has gone before."

The game master interrupts. "Your long-range sensors indicate an object 140,000 km away. It appears to be a lifeform unrecognizable by the computer banks. (Game master plops the Turkey Carcass 14 hexes away on the star map.) "It's closing in."

Captain: "Science officer, report! Is it alive?"

Science Officer: "It's some form of life, sir, but nothing we have seen before."

Game master: "Suddenly it emits some form of energy beam." (Game master places flashlight on other side of the Turkey Carcass and shines it through the body, aiming at the PCs' ship.) "It's got you in a tractor beam. It's drawing you into it's stuffing-encrusted maw!" (Game master tosses ship miniatures into Turkey Carcass.)

And, finally, my all-time favorite:

Call of Cthulhu: Keeper speaks: "You investigators were too late to stop the cultists' spell. In a flash of brown smoke and a stench of old gravy, THIS appears!" (Keeper hurls Turkey Carcass with a sickening splat in front of the players' figures.) "As your sanity flees to the winds, it attacks!" (The Keeper reaches into the Turkey Carcass and pulls out the raw giblets that he cleverly and with much foresight stashed away for just this moment. He takes a handful of the giblets and flings them at the lead figures while the players writhe helplessly on the carpet.)

Keeper: "The overwhelming horror of being attacked by Turkey Giblets from the nether regions is just too much for you! Time to roll up new characters."

Well, John, the Turkey Carcass is a great idea. But why wait for the holidays. Next time you visit your favorite take-out chicken restaurant, just save the bones, let them dry, and with a little imagination and super-bonding glue you can assemble your very own undead. And speaking of chickens, just think what fun you can have on liver and gizzard day! Now let's see what Denise Voskuil has to say.

Rick, On a study break I read your column in the Newszine. I like the part about food as miniatures. How about Gummy Bears as "gorks," especially the smaller ones like kobolds and goblins. If the DM is feeling generous, he could let each player who kills a creature, eat the corresponding Gummy Bear. It's something of an added incentive. If the DM loved using humanoid creatures in his game, the players might put on some weight, but that's life in the AD&D world. Gummy Worms, fish, and rats could be useful as well.

Denise, what's with you people? Do you all have a food fetish or something? Sorry, I was just kidding. Actually, you brought up a good point; the problem of weight gain when food is used extensively in an AD&D campaign. With the growing popularity of the "Food For Thought" section in Fun In Games and the number of people who actually incorporate food into their role playing activities, this is a real hazard.

Our next letter writer thankfully avoids the subject of food. Instead, Philip Flickinger has some "Slanguage" words he'd like to share with us:

I am a member of the Network, but I haven't gone to any conventions or been very active in the organization. So, I am contributing some words for your "Slanguage" column to get myself going. Listed below are some words that my friends and I use during our gaming sessions:

Spickanspan: This term is used by the party to state that they are searching every inch of an area looking for traps, magic, secret doors, or whatever. For instance, "We know there's a powerful artifact hidden here somewhere. We're going to "spickanspan" the room!"

Scruel: The term for a character who purchases hirelings and makes them walk in front of him, setting off traps and drawing fire.

Gnoweth: (rhymes with floweth) The mystical, rare power possessed by characters controlled by the DM which allows them to know where everything is in the scenario.

Quoins: Loose change (particularly copper pieces) left over from buying equipment.

Let's close the column with some "Slanguage" from John Terra.

Sftoid (sef-toyed): An acronym for "sixty feet, trails off into darkness." It is used by a DM in describing a portion of a long corridor. Since infravision has a 60' range, I've adopted that distance as the standard length of a room or hall that is lit by a mundane light source.

Nish: Short for initiative, as in: "Oh, no, a dragon! Who wants to roll 'nish?' "

Well, that's enough for this month. See you next time when we'll tackle some serious subjects for a change (but don't hold your breath). ❑

With Great Power

Stalking The Wolfpack

by William Tracy

There are several interesting heroes in the Marvel Universe who possess no mutant abilities or super powers to aid them in their feats of bravery. These heroes can be used as player characters for an adventure or for an entire campaign.

The heroes won't have eyebeams, control over the weather, or other special abilities, but the adventure will be just as exciting.

One such group of heroes is The Wolfpack, the protectors of the South Bronx. These characters are scheduled to appear in the Gamer's Handbook of the Marvel Universe #6, set for release in June, 1990.

History

According to an ancient tale, there always will exist in the world 10 good and just men. Because of the universal laws of balance, in return there always will exist nine evil men devoid of compassion and love. The Nine, as they were called, were said to be extremely successful in their lives, since they could bribe ordinary men with power and money.

One of The Ten good men realized that something must be done to stop The Nine. The man knew that he must leave The Ten and become a renegade warrior to accomplish this. The man formed a group that became known as The Wolfpack, a title that suited them because they had to survive in the wilderness while being hunted by The Nine's followers.

Bringing the legend up to date, in the 1980s one of the members of The Wolfpack, Mr. Mack, came to New York City, which had become through the decades one of The Nine's major bases. He trained five teenagers in the art of hand-to-hand combat and schooled them in ways of the ninja. Mr. Mack seemingly was killed, but the five teenagers continued the struggle for good, waging a war against The Nine's activities in the South Bronx. These teenagers comprised the newest Wolfpack.

All pack members have the following talents: marksman, weaponmaster, martial arts type A/B/C/D and E, acrobatics, tumbling, and first aid.

Rafael Vega

F	A	S	E	R	I	P
RM	GD	GD	EX	TY	GD	TY
(30)	(10)	(10)	(20)	(6)	(10)	(6)

Health: 70
Karma: 22
Popularity: 5/0 outside the Bronx
Resources: EX (20)

Background: Rafael is the best fighter in the group and leads the pack most of the time. He defers to Wheels's strategic skills when the situation calls for it. Rafael is the most emotional member of the team, which contributes to his short temper. However, he is extremely supportive of his friends, protective of his mother and siblings, and is very fond of Sharon, another pack member.

Slag

F	A	S	E	R	I	P
EX	GD	RM	EX	GD	GD	GD
(20)	(10)	(30)	(20)	(10)	(10)	(10)

Health: 80
Karma: 30
Popularity: 5/0 outside the Bronx
Resources: TY (6)

Talents: Slag's Reason should be considered Remarkable when dealing with Literature and Philosophy.

Background: Slag is the strongest member of the pack, but he is also the gentlest. He is a quiet, intense person who enjoys reading Shakespeare He is the real willpower and voice of reason behind the pack.

Sharon

F	A	S	E	R	I	P
EX	IN	GD	RM	TY	GD	GD
(20)	(40)	(10)	(30)	(6)	(10)	(10)

Health: 100
Karma: 26
Popularity: 5/0 outside the Bronx
Resources: 4 (PR)

Powers: Sharon has Good, Lightning Speed, allowing her to move 4 areas per round. She also has a +5 on initiative rolls, if not surprised or ambushed. She cannot attempt to do power stunts since this is not really a super power.

Background: Sharon is the daughter of a black Vietnamese veteran and a Vietnamese woman. Her mother died while she was young, making her learn how to rely on herself. She is a proud young woman and determined to be successful. The loves in her life include her father, who she takes care of, Rafael, and her ability to run like the wind.

Wheels Wolinski

F	A	S	E	R	I	P
EX	TY	GD	EX	EX	EX	EX
(20)	(6)	(10)	(20)	(20)	(20)	(20)

Health: 56
Karma: 60
Popularity: 5/0 outside the Bronx
Resources: 4 (PR)

Powers: A bad traffic accident has confined Wheels to a wheelchair, hence his nickname. He can move 3 areas per round on flat surfaces; going down an incline he can move 4 areas. He is unable to travel over some types of terrain, but he can manage to traverse some obstacles, such as a flight of stairs.

Wheels has been known to build little gadgets into his wheelchair, including an oilslick release, rocket assist (boosting his movement to 6 areas per round), hydraulic brakes, smoke grenade launchers, and side shields (which provide Good protection for himself and anyone in his lap).

He often is accompanied by his trained alley cat, Nine-Tails. Nine-Tails wears studded bands on his legs, allowing him to do Typical edged damage.

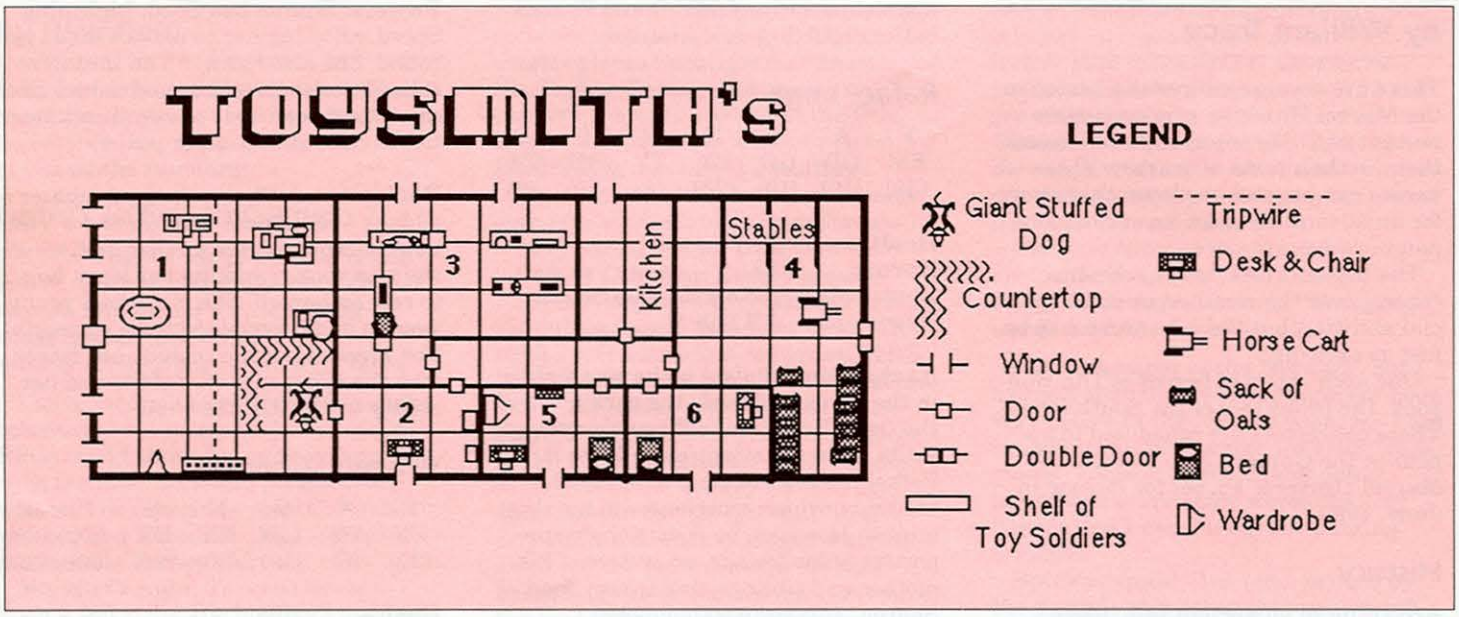
Talents: In addition to the typical pack talents, Wheels also has the Leadership and Repair/Tinkering abilities.

Background: Wheels is reserved and shy, rarely letting his emotions show. He is the strategic and tactical brains behind the group.

Continued on page 38

The Living City

The Toysmiths



by Steve Morton

"The Living City" is a continuing feature in the POLYHEDRON™ Newszine through which members can share their best fantasy city material with the rest of the Network. All acceptable submissions will eventually become part of TSR, Inc.'s series of LIVING CITY play-aids. If you have a building, business, encounter, or personality that adds some spice to your campaign's "town business" we'd like to see it.

Located in a busy business district, the Toysmiths' shop is one of the myriad, nondescript establishments on the street. It is identified only by the brightly painted sign showing a jester and the word "TOYSMITHS" in multi-colored letters.

The owners are Gunder and Relvan Gaewilder, and at least one of them will be inside the shop most of the time. Gunder and Relvan are two gnome brothers who brought their trade to the city about 28 years ago after Gunder was laughed out of his position in the Church of the Steelskin Forge because of his obsession with toys.

Much has changed since then. The Gaewilder toys are of such fine quality that the brothers' work is known from the Elven Court to the Lake of Tears. Even travelers from the farthest reaches of the Realms have heard tales of the gnomes' fine craft and stop by to see the fellows at work.

The fruits of the Gaewilders' labors range from mundane rag dolls to figurines inlaid with gold and precious gems. Therefore, they have a very wide range of clientele. Gunder and Relvan earn more than a prosperous living, but they always seem to have a surplus of unsold toys they have no room to store. It is for this reason (at least that's what the brothers say), that several times a year—usually on a holiday or festival—they give these extra toys away.

When time comes to give away their wares, Gunder and Relvan load up the toys on a brightly painted horse cart pulled by a horse permanently dyed blue (a result of one of Relvan's practical jokes). The toys are all shapes and sizes and intended for children of all ages. The brothers themselves dress up in colorful costumes and bright make-up. Gunder sits atop the cart, guiding the horse and handing out toys to the elated youngsters while Relvan dances, juggles, and performs acrobatic tricks to delight children and grown-ups alike.

Gunder Gaewilder

5th Level Male Gnome Cleric

STR: 15
INT: 11
WIS: 16
DEX: 16
CON: 11
CHA: 12
COM: 13
AC Normal: 6
AC Rear: 8
Hit Points: 21
Alignment: Neutral Good
Age: 384
Weapon Proficiencies: Hammer, Staff, Sling
Special Abilities: Toysmith, Artistic Ability, Engineering, Riding (Land)
Languages: Gnome Languages
Spells/day: 5 5 1

Magic Items: *Hammer +1*

Preferred priest spells: *create water, detect evil, detect magic, light, magic stone, augury, find traps, silence 15' radius, spiritual hammer, locate object*

Gunder often wears his leather armor simply out of habit from his days at the church. Despite his non-association with the order he once belonged to, he is still

quite religious, believing that Flandal Steelskin is the reason the toysmiths are so good at their craft. Gunder always wears red in homage to this great deity. He is extremely grateful for his ability to *locate object*, for he often misplaces tools, toy parts, and toys in general. Gunder hardly ever carries his hammer around with him. It is usually in its box under Gunder's bed.

Relvan Gaewilder

7th Level Male Gnome Thief

STR: 15
INT: 16
WIS: 13
DEX: 18
CON: 13
CHA: 11
COM: 13
AC Normal: 6
AC Rear: 10
Hit Points: 26
Alignment: Neutral Good
Age: 372
Weapon Proficiencies: Short Sword, Short Bow, Dagger
Special Abilities: Toysmith, Artistic Ability, Juggling, Tumbling
Languages: Gnome Languages

Thief Skills:

PP	OL	FT	MS	HS	DN	CW	RL
60	60	45	90	55	25	95	15

Magic Items: *Deck of illusions*

Relvan is the younger of the two smiths and is probably the finer craftsman. His dextrous fingers are capable of tedious detail, and Relvan puts the finishing touches on almost all of the toys. When he was younger, Relvan used his thieving abilities to get gold so that Gunder could afford to pursue his religious studies. Now his thieving days are over, finding satisfaction in his work. Besides, the toysmiths bring in more gold than he could ever steal (well, almost).

Relvan carries his *deck of illusions* with him at all times, but he will use it only if he, his brother, or the business, is in immediate danger. The *deck* already has 4d4 cards used. Relvan owns a dagger with a large emerald (1,250 gp) set into the pommel.

The Shop

1. The front door opens into the showroom. Toys of all kinds adorn the walls and obscure the corners of the room. Gunder (40%), Relvan (40%), or both (20%) will be here to greet customers during working hours. It is here that the customers may purchase toys, commission work, or conduct business. All business transactions are made in this room. A large stuffed dog lies on the floor in front of the door leading to the office (room 2). The stuffed dog contains the skeleton of a real war dog Gunder has animated. It will come to the aid of either Gunder or Relvan should trouble arise. The padding around the skeleton gives it a boost to the armor class, but slows the beast down, so that it always attacks last in a melee round.

Animal Skeleton: AL N; MV 4"; HD 1-1; hp 6; AC 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; Size M; In Non; SD edged weapons do 1/2 damage

At night, or when the toysmiths are away, the dog lies in the middle of the showroom and attacks any and all intruders. Also, Relvan sets up a trip wire across the room every night. It causes four toy soldiers to fire their crossbows. The victim will be hit with 1-4 darts (Dmg 1-3). The darts are tipped with type O poison.

The exact merchandise in the store and its sale value is left up to the DM. However, the Gaewilder's merchandise would be hard to fence if stolen, and the thieves could be easily traced due to the distinctive nature of the goods.

2. The office holds a small desk, strewn with paperwork. The paperwork includes invoices for materials, correspondence with clients, and other mundane records. The desk drawers are unlocked and contain quills, inks, paper, other office supplies, and a locked iron box. The lock is trapped with a *glyph of warding* placed there by Gunder. The *glyph* is electrical and will shock the victim for 10 points of electrical damage. Inside the box are two gold lion statuettes. These are *figurines of wondrous power*, and they are up for sale. The toysmiths do not advertise this and will show them only to a customer who specifically asks for something magical and looks like he can pay the asking price (not less than 5,000 gp). Relvan may try to take credit for creating the lions, but Gunder, if present, won't let him get away with it.

3. If one of the brothers is not in the showroom during working hours, he will be found here busily working on a new toy. This large room is cluttered with tables covered with half-finished toys and various tools. In a small wooden box on one of the tables is a metal jar filled with six ounces of *sovereign glue* and two vials of *oil of slipperiness* (one is half empty).

4. These stables house the famous blue horse aptly named "Sir Blue" and Relvan's pony named "Hazelnut." Fifteen sacks of high-quality oats also are stored here. In the northeast corner, next to the double doors, is a bright red horse cart which is used when the smiths give away their wares to the children of Ravens Bluff.

Sir Blue (Draft Horse): AL N; MV 12"; HD 3; hp 14; AC 7; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1- 3; Size L; In Ani

Hazelnut (Pony): AL N; MV 12"; HD 1+1; hp 8; AC 7; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; Size L; In Ani

5. This is Relvan's bed chamber. It is lavishly decorated in bright colors (everything except red, Relvan is sick of red). Many toys also adorn the room. A wardrobe holds many bright costumes and work clothes that are dull by comparison. A small wooden box under the bed contains 1,000 gp worth of assorted gems. The box has a complex lock that subtracts 5% from a thief's chance of picking locks.

6. Gunder's room is spartan compared to Relvan's. Books on religion, craftsmanship, and gnome history are stored in a small desk on which sits an oil lamp. A small iron box in the bottom desk drawer is locked and trapped with a *glyph* like the one in the office. The box holds the current profits from the business; a total of 4,346 gp in assorted coins. Relvan trusts Gunder to keep hold of the earnings since he also keeps all of the records and the details of business; details bore Relvan. The desk also holds a small, discolored, pewter vial containing four more doses of the paralyzation poison used for the toy soldier trap in the showroom.

A large metal symbol of a flaming hammer adorns the west wall. When Gunder regains spells he prays before the symbol. Under the bed is an ornately-forged iron box with no apparent lock. Gunder has placed another one of his *glyphs of warding* here; this one causes blindness. The box is lined in red velvet padding and contains Gunder's *hammer +1*. ❑

The Living City

The Brothers Galgolar Pawnshop

by Jim Lowder

The pawnshop owned and operated by Jeffers and Malachi Galgolar displays the traditional pawnbroker's symbol of three golden spheres on its sign. Below the spheres, in weatherbeaten lettering, reads: *Galgolar Bros. Pawnbrokers.*

The shop is located on the lowest floor of a well-kept, three-story building. The structure's second floor is used entirely for storage, and the owners have their living quarters on the third floor. The shop itself is not designed for casual browsers, and business is done entirely over the wooden counter that dominates the store's large, open front.

The Galgolar family has run a pawnshop in Ravens Bluff almost since the city was founded. Jeffers and Malachi are the twin sons of the last pawnbroker, Joseph Galgolar, who died almost twenty years ago. The twins, although practically identical physically, are not at all alike in alignment or temperament, and more than one adventurer has found himself in serious trouble by proposing a shady deal to Jeffers or assuming that Malachi could be trusted as his brother can be.

There are also rumors in the city that the ghosts of all the Galgolar pawnbrokers reside in the warehouse above the shop, protecting their heirs and the merchandise held in the pawnshop. Some heavy research with the city's older residents will reveal the truth behind this rumor; the Galgolar family fosters this ghost story to keep thieves away from their shop.

The Galgolars' establishment is run like any other pawnshop. People wishing to secure cash bring in an item of value to serve as collateral. The brothers appraise and set a value for the item and give out cash—in the currency of Ravens Bluff, of course—and set an interest rate for the loan and the date the loan must be paid off in full. If the borrower defaults on the loan, the item used as collateral is forfeited to the Galgolars, who in turn sell it to make back their capital.

Typical interest rates and due dates for loans from the Brothers Galgolar are simple:

Loans up to 10 gp:
1% interest/due in 15 days
Loans from 11 gp to 50 gp:
2% interest/due in 30 days
Loans from 51 gp to 100 gp:
4% interest/due in 60 days
Loans from 101 gp to 1,000 gp:
5% interest/due in 120 days
Loans from 1,000 gp to 5,000 gp:
10% interest/due in 240 days
Loans from 5,001 gp to 10,000 gp:
20% interest/due in 1 year

The Galgolars usually will not lend more than 10,000 gp to anyone, regardless of what they have for collateral. In fact, the brothers are unlikely to make loans over 500 gp to most people; if they do, they'll look for rare items (or magic items) for collateral. The rates for the loans are fixed and do not vary from customer to customer (except when Malachi arranges a questionable deal).

Actually, the rates and practices for all *legal* pawnshops in Ravens Bluff are established and monitored by the city government through the Regent of the Exchequer. This keeps interest rates reasonable and stops pawnbrokers and other moneylenders from charging too much for loans or cheating customers out of their collateral.

Only one of the brothers will be found in the shop during business hours, which are sunrise to dusk, six days a week. As a customer looks into the shop from the counter, he will see a neatly ordered and labeled stockpile of both mundane and exotic items. Regular customers of the Brothers Galgolar know that there are few items too bizarre to be found in the pawnshop. One only need ask at the right time.

There should be at least a slight chance that *any* item worth 10,000 gp or less will be in the shop at any given time. However, just because an item is in the shop, does not mean it is for sale. The pawnbrokers might have, for example, a *ring of invisibility*, but they might be holding it for a year before they know if the person who put it up as collateral has defaulted on his loan.

If someone inquires about an item the brothers have as collateral, that item will be "reserved" in case the debtor defaults. A potential sale is often as good as an actual sale to the Galgolars.

The Galgolar Brothers Pawnshop often hires adventurers to deliver valuable merchandise to distant parts of the Realms. It is not unusual for the pawnshop to have two different groups escorting goods to places as far away as Waterdeep or even Shou Lung.

Jeffers Galgolar

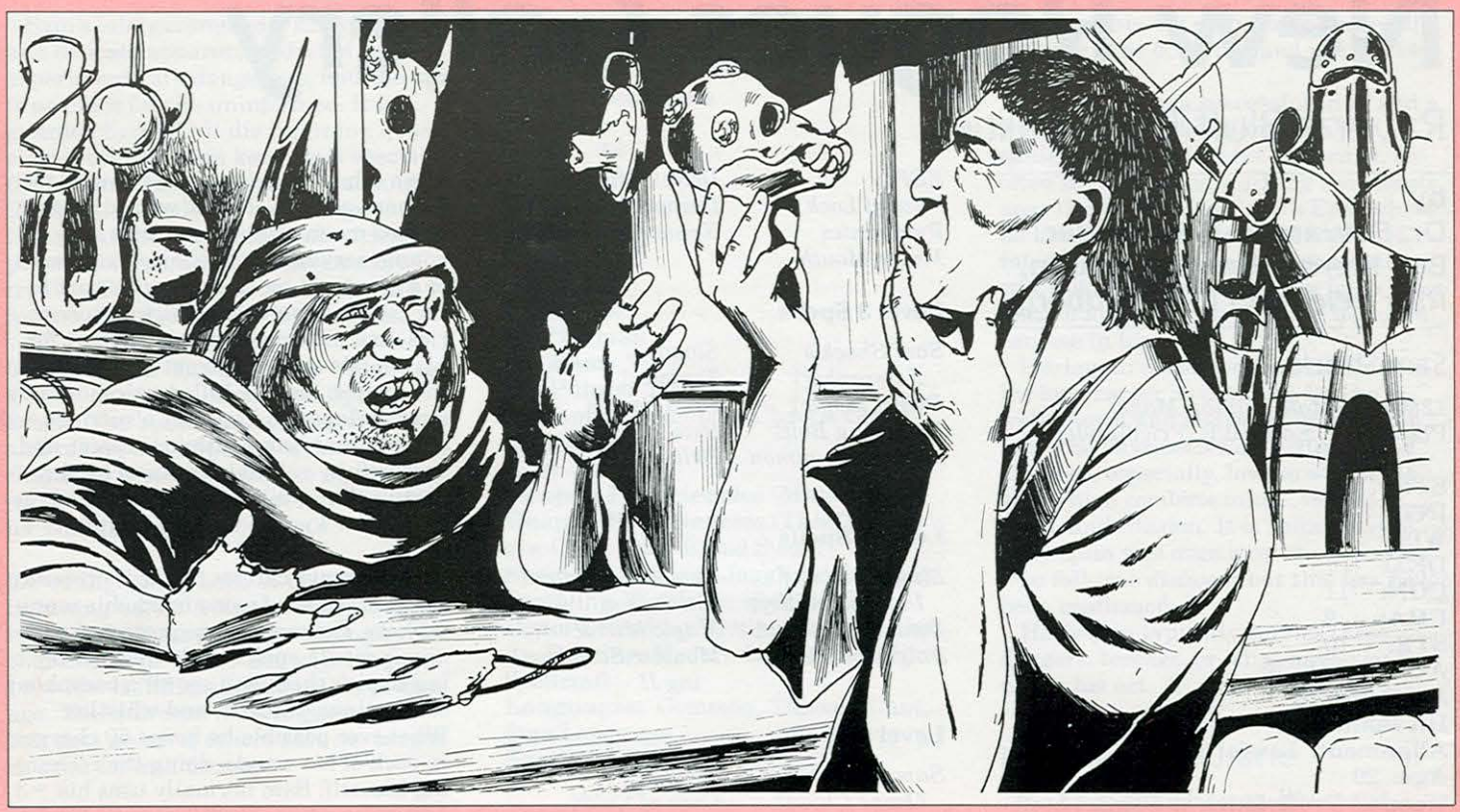
2nd Level Male Human Fighter

STR: 14
INT: 12
WIS: 10
DEX: 11
CON: 12
CHA: 16
COM: 14
AC Normal: 10
AC Rear: 10
Hit Points: 16
Alignment: Lawful Good
Age: 47
Weapon Proficiencies: Long Sword, Dagger
Special Abilities: Artistic Ability, Appraising
Magic Items: *Ring of delusion*
Languages: Common, Dwarven, Thorass

Though now in his forties, Jeffers Galgolar is in excellent condition. Like his twin brother, he has light brown hair, a thin, jutting chin, and dull brown eyes. He is an even-tempered man, slow to anger and quick to forgive.

The pawnshop is Jeffers's whole life. When his father died, he left the family business to Jeffers and Malachi, who were to run the shop as equal partners. Since the shop has been a reputable part of Ravens Bluff for more than a hundred years, Jeffers sees it as his duty to the Galgolar family to run the pawnshop as an honest, law-abiding venture. He often will be found whistling an elaborate tune or quoting poetry to himself at the shop.

While still a young man, Jeffers did a little adventuring—connected with the family business, of course. Occasionally, the pawnshop needs an item delivered to a buyer. When this happens, they send a family member to guard the object being delivered. Jeffers traveled all across Faerun in this capacity, see-



ing Waterdeep and other distant cities.

Jeffers is a staunch believer in Law and Good, so he will never cheat a customer or accept anything as collateral that might be stolen. He discourages thieves from using his business as a depository for stolen merchandise; if someone tries to sell the Galgolar Brothers Pawnshop stolen goods while Jeffers is on duty, he will immediately call the watch and report the thieves. Unfortunately for Jeffers, passing off stolen goods is easy for customers who are careful because of the *ring of delusion* Jeffers wears. He believes it is a *ring of truth*. The ring was a present from his twin, Malachi, who convinced his good brother that the ring would help him to detect lies. Though Jeffers can remove the ring at any time, he honestly believes the ring is what Malachi says it is.

The ring obviously hasn't helped Jeffers to see that Malachi is not a good person. The evil half of the Galgolar Brothers is careful about hiding his misdeeds from his brother. But since the twins see each other rarely, this isn't too difficult.

Malachi Galgolar

3rd Level Human Thief

STR: 13
INT: 15
WIS: 10
DEX: 15
CON: 12
CHA: 13
COM: 14
AC Normal: 3
AC Rear: 4
Hit Points: 15
Alignment: Lawful Evil
Age: 47
Weapon Proficiencies: Short Sword, Dagger
Special Abilities: Appraising, Forgery
Magic Items: *Bracers of defense AC 4*, *ring of chameleon power*
Languages: Common, Thorass, Drow, Orcish, Thieves Cant

Thief Skills:

PP	OL	FT	MS	HS	DN	CW	RL
75	50	5	10	15	15	60	10

Malachi Galgolar is an identical twin to Jeffers, and the two still look alike, even though they're in their forties. However, while Jeffers is a defender of Law and Good, Malachi favors Law and Evil.

When Jeffers was learning to wield a sword escorting caravans across Faerun, Malachi was busy learning the thieving arts from members of a local thieves guild. He spent much of his time perfecting his skills as a pickpocket, though he can also attempt to open locks with a fair chance of success.

Malachi does not share Jeffers's idealistic vision of the pawnshop's role in the every day life of Ravens Bluff. He only held to his father's wish that he run the shop with his brother because it was a lawful thing to do, but Malachi uses the shop as a front for his illegal activities. Whereas Jeffers will turn in someone fencing stolen goods at the shop, Malachi encourages it. He pays top price for stolen property—especially magical weapons—and will gladly forge receipts or other ownership papers if he's paid enough. He will often hire tough fighters to rough up customers with large outstanding debts, and he's even been known to pay a party to hijack one of Jeffers's caravans on the way to a delivery.

Continued on page 38

New Rogues Gallery

Ravens Bluff Personalities

by
Dr. Edward R. Friedlander, Ben Pierce, Francois Poulin, Rick Reid, and Rich Rydberg

Sam Shock

12th level Male Human Mage
Player: Dr. Edward R. Friedlander

STR: 15
INT: 18
WIS: 14
DEX: 7
CON: 11
CHA: 9
STR: 10
AC Normal: 10
AC Rear: 10
Hit Points: 28
Alignment: Lawful Good
Age: 29
Weapon Proficiencies: Dagger, Staff
Special Abilities: Spellcraft (1), Reading/Writing (1), Astrology, Riding (land-based), Ancient History
(#) = additional slots spent on the skill
Magic Items: *Wand of lightning* (50 charges), *wand of conjuration* (50 charges), *dagger +3, ring of lighting resistance*, ring of regeneration, ring of Serten's spell immunity*, ring of protection +3*

*New item

Languages: Common
Spells/Day: 4 4 4 4 4 1

Familiar: A large mouse named Ampir. AC 7, MV 15, HD 1; hp 14; #AT 1; D 1

Spell Books:

Level 1 Spells

Sam Shock's Flashlight†
Sam Shock's Farseer†
Magic Missile
Charm Person‡
Cantrip
Enlarge
Detect Magic
Identify
Shield
Shocking Grasp
ESP‡
Wizard Lock
Pyrotecnics
Magic Mouth
Detect Evil
Deeppockets
Know Alignment

Level 2 Spells

Sam Shock's Magic Ear†
Web‡
Invisibility‡
Slow‡
Tongues‡
Hold Person
Item
Delude

Level 3 Spells

Sam Shock's Farspeaker†
Dispel Magic‡
Lightning Bolt‡
Monster Summoning I
Minor Globe of Invulnerability‡
Dimension Door‡
Polymorph Self‡
Remove Curse‡
Enervation
Magic Mirror
Monster Summoning II

Level 4 Spells

Sam Shock's Ozone Cloud†
Cloudkill‡
Hold Monster‡
Monster Summoning III
Teleport‡
Cone of Cold‡
Wall of Force
Invisible Stalker

Level 5 Spells

Sam Shock's Capacitor†
Sam Shock's Lightning Rod†
Anti-magic Shell‡
Geas
Chain Lightning
Stone to Flesh
Monster Summoning IV

Level 6 Spells

† New spell
‡ Spell usually carried

Sam Shock is short and muscular. He has flaming red hair that clashes with the electric-blues of his robes and pointy hat. He is shy and unassuming, with a dry sense of humor. Sam is 5′ 6″ tall and weighs 156 lbs. Ampir, his familiar, always perches on his shoulder. Sam maintains a stronghold and laboratory somewhere in the wilderness, but he always has been too busy with adventuring and work to raise a family or develop a territory, though he sometimes visits Ravens Bluff to consult with colleague Ambassador Carrague.

Sam has a strong social conscience, rare among wizards. Much like the diligent, human scientists from technological worlds, Sam's personal goal is to serve others by advancing knowledge. Famous as "the electric wizard," Sam gained much experience while still young, serving as the major henchman of a great ranger lord. He took part in the pacification of several wild territories, and provided magical support for his friends as they adventured through the planes. He was killed twice (once by a mind flayer and once by a subdued red dragon guarding a githyanki lair), and successfully raised both times by the party's cleric. Wherever he traveled, he found new knowledge and shared it freely.

Sam always carries magic items and an assortment of gems inside his many pockets. He keeps these protected with *magic mouth* spells, and any thief trying to pick them will set off a cacophony of warnings, catcalls, and whistles. Whenever possible he keeps 50 charges in each of his wands, doing the recharging himself. Sam normally uses his +3 dagger as a tool, but he is quite capable of defending himself with it.

Sam is very safety-conscious and always wears his *ring of lightning resistance* and his *ring of regeneration* when working in his lab. When dealing with people, he switches these for his *ring of Serten's spell immunity* and his *ring of protection +3*.

Sam doesn't do much wandering or adventuring, spending most of his time working in his lab. When adventurers come visiting, he will be hard at work. He always has 1d4 +4 0-level workers assisting him; all are fiercely loyal. If visitors wait until Sam comes to a stopping-place with his experiments, he will greet them pleasantly, but he will have little to say unless there is a spell caster among them. If there is, Sam will be eager to exchange information, and they may end up talking all night.

If visiting adventurers merely want a *stone to flesh* or *remove curse* spell, Sam will accept any reasonable payment (especially new knowledge) from adventurers with good alignments, though they may have to wait several days before he can help. He is always pleased to train non-evil wizards. He does not join adventuring parties except to help win a major victory for Good. When going on such adventures he will select appropriate spells.

Sam's lab is crammed with complex and delicate apparatus. Most of the experiments are dangerous, and the lab is no place for the uninformed. It is guarded by a 16-hit-die lightning quasi-elemental that Sam keeps in a special flask. Sam can release it by breaking the flask. Intruders who manage to investigate Sam's equipment without permission are asking for even more trouble. For each turn poking around in his lab, roll d100 for each character:

01 Explosion: The character has caused a burst of natural flame and flying debris. The burst has a diameter 20′ and causes 1d100 points of damage. The character who triggered the blast gets no save, other save vs. breath weapon for half damage.

02–04 Lightning bolt: A bolt of magical lightning bursts from the nearest apparatus and passes dircectly through the character. The bolt is 1d6 x10′ long and 10′ wide. It inflicts 1d100 points of damage. The character who triggered the bolt gets no save, others save vs. breath weapon for half damage.

05–20 Live wire: The character, and anyone else touching him, takes 1d20 points of electrical damage (no save).

21–22 Supercooled Liquid: The character is doused and takes 1d20 points of damage (save vs. breath weapon for half).

23–25 Superheated Liquid: The character is drenched and takes 1d20 damage (save vs. breath weapon for half damage).

26–28 Poison Gas: Everyone within 20′ must save vs. class J poison (see DMG, page 73).

29–30 Stinking Cloud: This is a non-magical version of the 2nd level wizard spell. It lasts 10 minutes. Sam may choose this moment to counterattack from hiding.

31–00 No mishap this turn for this character.

Harlequin

Male Human Mage/Thief 6/8
Player: Ben Pierce

STR: 16
INT: 18
WIS: 9
DEX: 18
CON: 15
CHA: 16
COM: 15
AC Normal: 2
AC Rear: 7
Hit Points: 24
Alignment: Neutral (Chaotic Good tendencies)
Age: 32
Weapon Proficiencies (Mage): Staff
Weapon Proficiencies (Thief): Dagger, Club, Dart, Broad Sword
Special Abilities: Juggling, Jumping, Tumbling, Tightrope Walking, Local History, Reading/Writing, Artistic Ability, Dancing, Modern Languages, Mime, Spellcraft
Languages: Common, Thieves' Cant, Sign Language
Spells/day: 4 2 2

Thief Skills:

PP	OL	FT	MS	HS	DN	CW	RL
95	35	40	50	60	45	95	20

Magic Items: *Eversmoking bottle, hat of disguise, cloak of protection +3, boots of striding and springing*

Spell Books:

Level 1 Spells:

Cantrip
Phantasmal Force
Unseen Servant
Audible Glamer
Ventriloquism
Charm Person

Level 2 Spells:

Improved Phantasmal Force
Misdirection
ESP
Invisibility
Deeppockets
Ray of Enfeeblement

Level 3 Spells:

Spectral Force
Suggestion
Wraithform

Harlequin is one of Ravens Bluff's most distinctive personalities. He dresses in a tight-fitting, piebald suit and wears half face makeup; one side dead black, the other stark white. If anyone alive today knows what he looks like under the makeup, that person isn't telling. When not using his *hat of disguise* Harlequin appears to be 5′ 7″ tall and weighs 142 pounds.

Besides being a successful thief and a worker of magicks, Harlequin is a skilled mime and street performer. He often may be found working the streets near the docks or in Crow's End, where he lives. He is an excellent source of information about happenings in the city, but he perfers to deal in fresh information and magic, especially items he can use in his shows.

Harlequin seldom speaks (a result of his long career as a mime), but he is well known and respected by common folk who have seen him perform. The children, especially, love to watch his acts which combine mime, sleight of hand, and illusion. It is rumored that Harlequin was once a court entertainer who fell into disfavor, but this has never been confirmed.

Harlequin typically carries three daggers, torches, or what-have-you for use in his act.

Nuelman the Oracle

12th Level Male Human Illusionist
NPC, DM Francois Poulin

STR: 11
INT: 18
WIS: 18
DEX: 16
CON: 9
CHA: 15
COM: 10
AC Normal: 9
AC Rear: 10
Hit Points: 28
Alignment: Neutral
Age: 41
Weapon Proficiencies: Staff, Dart
Special Abilities: Ancient History, Local History, Heraldry, Appraising, Reading/Writing, Ancient Languages
Languages: Common, Ruathlek
Spells/day: 4 4 4 4 4 1 (plus one additional illusion spell/level)
Magic Items: *Medallion of ESP, amulet of proof against detection and location, crystal ball*

Spell Books:

Level 1 Spells:

Audible Glamer
Change Self
Detect Magic
Phantasmal Force
Hypnotism
Identify
Spook

Level 2 Spells:

Magic Mouth *Darkness 15'Radius*
Mirror Image *Whispering Wind*
Hypnotic Pattern *Misdirection*

Level 3 Spells:

Spectral Force *Delude*
Hold Person *Tongues*
Wraithform

Level 4 Spells:

Emotion *Solid Fog*
Phantasmal Killer *Vacancy*

Level 5 Spells:

Shadow Door *Shadow Magic*
Major Creation

Level 6 Spells:

Veil *Mislead*

Nuelman has a ruddy, hawk-nosed face, brown eyes, and light brown hair that is going gray at the temples and getting thin at the crown. He is 5′ 6″ tall and weighs 101 pounds.

Nuelman is the third child of a wealthy merchant family. Although he had a relatively easy childhood, his quest for knowledge brought trouble. Being highly intelligent, he decided to attend a special university for illusionists. This did not please his parents, as they expected him to become a merchant like his forefathers. Thinking he would come to his senses soon enough, his parents let him be. However, Nuelman had no intention of quiting his career, and his parents realized this when he wouldn't leave the university after they made several (from their point of view) tempting offers to set him up in business.

Nuelman's first adventure was the last straw, and his parents disinherited him. This adventure was also a very painful experience, as he barely escaped with his life from an angry sabre-tooth tiger. Most of the party was killed, and Nuelman came back to town with hardly any money and no companions.

Nuelman settled into a tavern to drink away the blues. There he met Glater, a gnome and his soon-to-be master. Impressed by Nuelman's high intelligence, Glater took him as a pupil and henchman. After a very large number of adventures, Nuelman quickly rose through the lower levels. When he wasn't adventuring, he was reading, and he went through his master's vast library in a flash.

Then, after living on his adventuring profits for quite a few years, Nuelman decided to retire when he took a serious battle wound. He already had surpassed his master, and he was also a rich man; owning both a home in Ravens Bluff and a hefty bank account.

Retirement bored him very quickly and he decided to start doing something with himself. He spent a great deal of money to build himself a comprehensive library. This done, he started working as a sage and oracle, selling information and advice to those in need.

Nuelman had a new wing added to his house, built especially for his new practice. He filled it with books and with strange art and items he had found while adventuring. He uses his *medallion of ESP* to impress his customers by telling them exactly what they want without their having to ask it. He has studied this item a very long time and has become so skillful at using it that he never fails to divine what a customer wants to know. He relies on his library and his *crystal ball* to help him find information.

Spunk (and Grizzard)

Male Gold Elf Fighter/Mage 5/7
NPC, DM Rick Reid

STR: 15
INT: 18
WIS: 13
DEX: 16
CON: 12
CHA: 16
COM: 17
AC Normal: 4
AC Rear: 8
Hit Points: 25
Alignment: Neutral (Chaotic Neutral tendencies)
Age: 326
Weapon Proficiencies (Mage): Staff, Dart
Weapon Proficiencies (Fighter): Dagger, Short Sword, Short Bow, Long Sword, Knife
Special Abilities: Ventriloquism (1), Puppeteer, Singing, Gaming, Endurance, Swimming, Elvish abilities
(#) = additional slots spent on the skill
Languages: Common, Elvish Languages
Spells/day: 4 3 2 1
Magic Items: *Bracers of defense AC 6, short sword +1*

Spell Books:

Level 1 Spells:

Sleep *Charm Person*
Cantrip *Magic Missile*
Shocking Grasp *Color Spray*

Level 2 Spells:

Flaming Sphere *Knock*
Stinking Cloud *Web*

Level 3 Spells:

Fireball *Haste*
Non-detection

Level 4 Spells:

Confusion *Dimension Door*

Spunk is a very handsome figure with wavy brown hair and soft green eyes. He is 5′ 3″ tall and weighs 105 pounds. His favorite garb is well-worn leather, and his weapons of choice are a short sword and bow. He speaks in a soft voice, is very polite, and tries to appear wholesome and trustworthy.

Spunk claims to be an orphan, discovered and raised by a clan of elves near the Vale of Lost Voices and now engaged in a search for his natural parents. Spunk loves to have fun — especially at the expense of humans. His favorite trick is to introduce himself to a party of mostly human adventurers as a skilled fighter looking for work. If he is accepted, he tells the group that he only travels in the company of his best friend, a very wise and mysterious wizard named Grizzard. He claims that Grizzard will be a very valuable member of the party, and if the characters are willing, he will arrange an introduction. With that, he sticks his right hand in his knapsack and produces a crude hand puppet wearing a starred robe, pointed hat, and long white beard. This he introduces as Grizzard The Great and Wonderous, High Purveyor of Prestidigitation and Prince of Preponderance. Spunk is an accomplished ventriloquist and can speak for Grizzard in a gravely voice without moving his lips. If the party seems skeptical, as they rightly should, Spunk demonstrates the wizard's power by having him cast a spell. Actually Spunk is casting the spell, making the gestures through the puppet and speaking the words in its voice. But to the spectators it will seem as if the puppet is indeed a magician. Spunk remains very solemn throughout the charade, treating the

puppet with utmost respect. Spunk never will do anything to endanger any group he is invited to join; he gets his fun from watching their reactions to Grizzard. He has a whole ensemble for the puppet, including a miniature spell book, tiny wand, little backpack, glasses, and a pipe. Grizzard's personality, as developed by Spunk, is very naughty and caustic, as befits a "wizard" of his high station and intelligence. He loves to bark orders; sometimes, when in a bad mood, he will not make an appearance unless summoned by his full title. In all other respects Spunk performs his duties as a fighter without hesitation and is genuinely friendly to the other members. If someone mentions to him that Grizzard is a puppet he will act very upset and pretend to sulk until an apology is offered. His ultimate goal is to actually get the group to believe that the puppet is real and to accept it as a party member. When this is accomplished, he will find the opportunity to slip away from the group, without farewell or explanations, to search for other victims for his peculiar brand of fun.

Devon Tresk

0 Level Male Human Thief
NPC, DM Richard J. Rydberg

STR: 7
INT: 13
WIS: 8
DEX: 15
CON: 11
CHA: 10 (13)
COM: 11 (15)
AC Normal: 9
AC Rear: 10
Hit Points: 6
Alignment: Chaotic Neutral (Good tendencies)
Age: 9
Weapon Proficiencies: Knife
Special Abilities: None
Languages: Common
Magic Items: *Amulet of charming*, keening wheel**

* New item

Devon is a small boy with bushy blond hair, brown eyes, and a ready smile. He is 3′ 10″ tall and weighs 90 pounds. His clothes are not fine, but they are in fairly good repair. He wears a small gold amulet and carries a sharpening wheel with him wherever he goes, announcing his ability to sharpen any blade that needs a keen edge.

Devon Tresk was once just one of the small urchins who roamed the wharfs and seedier parts of Ravens Bluff. He was orphaned at an early age when his parents, poor merchants passing through town, were murdered for what few goods they had. Devon took to scavanging and petty theft to survive. He was rather small for his age, so the other street children of the area were often quite cruel to him. He roamed for the better part of a year before an accidental discovery changed his life.

One night, during a heavy storm, Devon sought shelter in an old, burned shack near the waterfront. During his exploration, he fell through a weakened floorboard and discovered a long-forgotten room underneath. Upon closer and more careful examination, Devon decided that he had stumbled upon an old fix-it shop, with rotting pieces of leather, rope and twine, scrap metal, nails and tacks, dried tar, dull knives, and rusted tools scattered about. There were one or two pieces of clothing in relatively good shape, a sharpening wheel on its own stand, and a small charm necklace.

Thinking he could get a few coppers for some of the better items he had found, he took the clothes, charm, and sharpening wheel and left the shack when the storm blew over.

While on his way to sell his treasure, a drunken sailor spotted him, grabbed him by the collar and demanded that Devon sharpen his dagger. Not knowing how, but too fearful to refuse, Devon did the best he could under the circumstances. When the job was done, the sailor seemed quite satisfied with the quality of the work and gave Devon a copper piece in payment.

Devon didn't quite know how to handle the turn of events, but he gratefully accepted the coin and ran off. It slowly dawned on Devon that he might be on to something, and he began offering his services as a blade sharpener near the harbor and some inland neighborhoods. His new enterprise was quite successful, and he has earned enough money to rent an old, but comfortable side room at a harbor inn.

Before his luck changed, Devon's only wish was to survive any way he could, but now he makes a small living doing honest work, mostly. He still has a thieving tendency that tempts him to lift a few extra coins off of drunken sailors and the like (PP 30%), but if he comes up with an item that is quite valuable (like a gem), he will return it, saying that he saw it drop. The other urchins of the area no longer bother him because he is paying one of the young bullies of the docks to come to his aid should he ever find himself the victim of abuse by his peers. He has had no trouble since this arrangement was made. A few of the harbor regulars, including Harlequin, know him by name, and one of the bards in the area, Neil Brightgem, has become a fast friend of his. Unless trouble is coming his way, Devon is open and friendly, ready to do his work for the proper payment or give directions to strangers passing through the city.

Devon doesn't know it, but he owes his success to more than just fortunate happenstance. His amulet and grinding wheel are enchanted. (See New Magic Items, below).

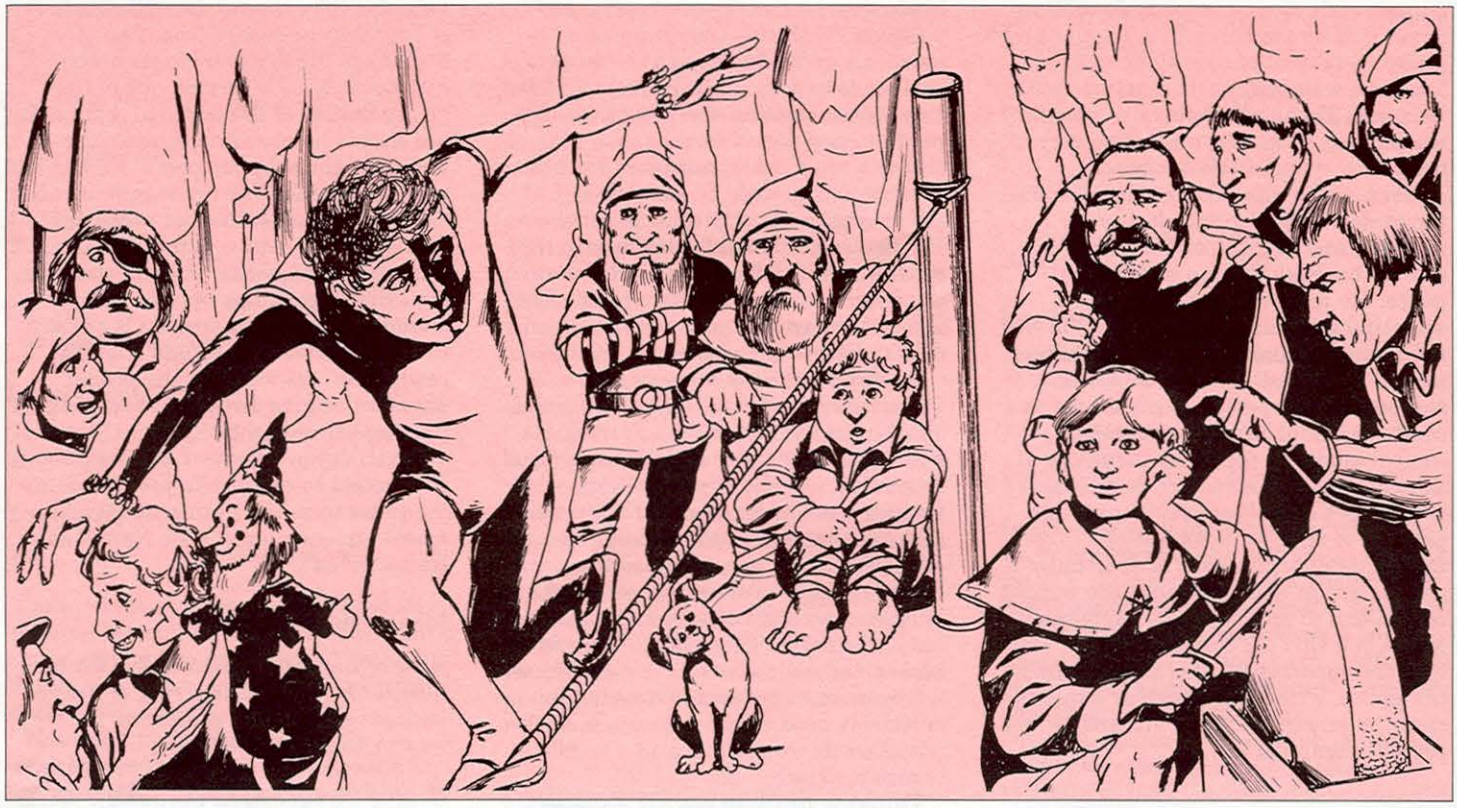
New Magic Items

Ring of Lighting Resistance: This ring functions exactly like a *ring of fire resistance* except that it protects the wearer from electricity.

Ring of Serten's Spell Immunity: Once per day, this ring can generate one *Serten's spell immunity* spell, duration 18 turns. The wearer can use the effect on himself, or share it with other characters as explained in the spell description (PHB, page 192).

Amulet of Charming: Anyone viewing the amulet is favorably disposed to the wearer (saving throw vs. spells negates the effect). Furthermore, the wearer's charisma and comeliness are raised three points.

Wheel of Keening: This enchanted sharpening wheel makes a pleasant, almost musical sound when used. Any blade sharpened by this device gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls and damage for one round when next used in battle. The magic lasts one day or until the blade is used for normal cutting or carving. The blade itself does not radiate magic even while the bonus is in effect.



New Spells

Sam Shock's Flashlight *(Alteration)*

Level: 1
Range: 40 yards + 20 yards/level
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 1 hour/level
Casting time: 1
Area of effect: Special
Saving throw: None

This spell produces a device that generates a beam of light that is 10′ wide at maximum range. Opaque objects block the beam. The holder can turn the beam off and on at will in negligible time. A thief hiding in shadows must roll again if struck by the beam. The beam is not equal to sunlight, but it can disorient light-sensitive creatures (drow, derro, duegar, svirfneblin, mindflayers, et al); the creature must save vs. spell. If the save fails, the creature suffers a -4 penalty to attack rolls (and a +4 bonus to saves vs. its spells) for 1d6 minutes. Any contact with magical darkness or a successful *dispel magic* destroys the device. The material component is a drop of will-o-wisp essence, which might be available commercially at a minimum of 10 gp/drop.

Sam Shock's Farseer *(Alteration)*

Level: 1
Range: Special
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 4 rounds + 1 round/level
Casting time: 1
Area of effect: Special
Saving throw: None

This spell enables the magic-user to see anything in plain view as if it were very close. The range of this spell is limited only by the caster's line of sight. The material component is a miniature tube of iron and two quartz crystals.

Sam Shock's Magic Ear *(Alteration)*

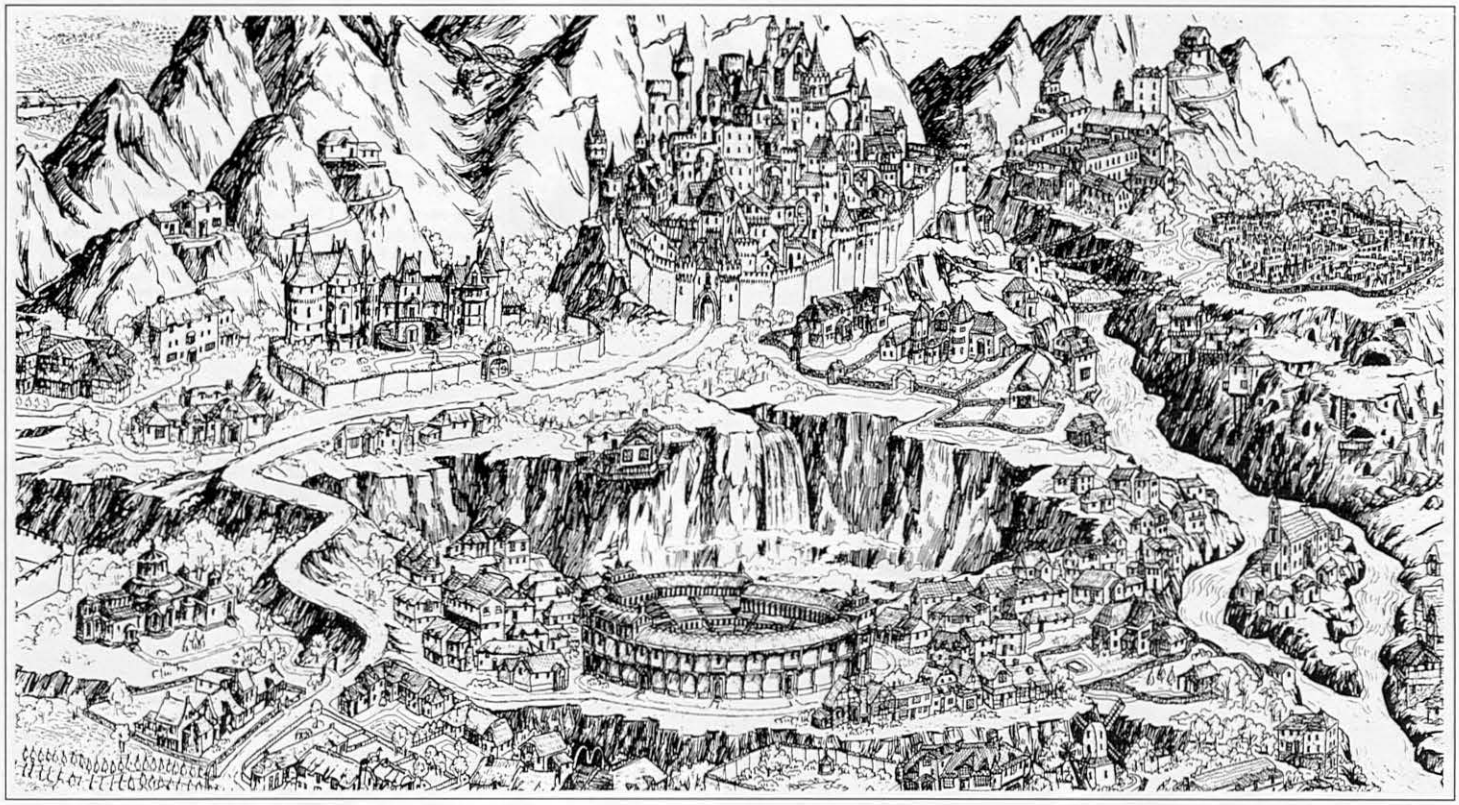
Level: 2
Range: 40 yards + 10 yards/level
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 4 rounds + 1 round/level
Casting time: 2
Area of effect: 3′ radius circle
Saving throw: None

This spell amplifies all sound within the area of effect, so any normal sound can be heard clearly through as much as 1,000 feet of air, 10 feet of wood, or 1 foot of stone. The small circle from which sound is amplified may be moved within range as long as the spell lasts. Very loud sounds (the roar of a lion or dragon) and sounds that are already magically amplified (the roar of an androsphinx or dragonne, a *shout* spell, etc.) overload and cancel the spell, leaving the recipient stunned for 1d4 rounds unless he saves vs. petrification. An *amulet of proof against detection and location* or other magical protection against detection or a *silence* spell may also cancel the spell, at the DM's option. The material component is a feather from a giant owl's head or a drop of blood drawn from the ear of a creature with acute hearing.

Sam Shock's Farspeaker *(Alteration)*

Level: 3
Range: ½ mile/level, maximum 5 miles
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 1 hour/level
Casting time: 3
Area of effect: Special
Saving throw: None

This spell enchants two or more boxes so that speech into one will be heard out of all the others, so long as they remain within range of the caster. The magic-user must touch each box while casting the spell. Material component is 100 gp worth of fine silver wire per box, plus



heart's blood from a hydra with at least as many heads as the number of boxes.

Sam Shock's Ozone Cloud *(Evocation)*

Level: 5
Range: 10 yards
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 1 round
Casting time: 5
Area of effect: 40′ wide, 20′ high, 20′ deep cloud
Saving throw: 1/2

This spell generates an invisible cloud of ozone that merely irritates most creatures, but which does 1d6 points (count any 1s rolled as 2s) damage/caster level to fungi, gelatinous cubes, jellies, molds, oozes, puddings, and slimes. A successful saving throw indicates half damage. Casting the spell also produces spectacular electric sparks, and everyone in the cloud or within 10 feet of the cloud must save vs. petrification or be blinded for 1d4 rounds. The material component is an extract from an entire, volt, shocker, or electric eel.

Sam Shock's Capacitor *(Alteration)*

Level: 6
Range: 40 yards + 10 yards/level
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 6 turns/level
Casting time: 6
Area of effect: One box
Saving throw: Negates

Using this spell, the caster places a charge on a box made of any non-conductive material. After the spell is complete, the caster must speak a command word while still in range of the box. After the command word is spoken, the charge will be delivered to the next mass of metal of greater than one pound that comes within 10 feet of the box. If two or more such masses are within 10 feet, the charge will be delivered to the heavier one. The charge delivers 3d8 points +1 point/level of electrical damage to the creature carrying or wearing the metal. A saving throw applies; if successful, the spark is harmlessly grounded or, at the DM's option, attracted to another mass of metal large enough and close enough to attract it. The box is not damaged by the spell in any case. The material is a bit of phlegm from a blue or bronze dragon.

Sam Shock's Lightning Rod *(Abjuration)*

Level: 6
Range: Special
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 1 turn/level
Casting time: 6
Area of effect: 30′ radius
Saving throw: None

This spell requires a pole at least 6′ long, made entirely of metal. As the spell is completed, the rod implants itself firmly into the ground or stone floor. Any bolt of lightning—natural, druidically summoned, magically invoked, blue or bronze dragon breath—coming within 30′ of the rod will be diverted to pass through the rod and into the ground. Unless the party is within the area of effect, or in front of the rod, the electricity will miss them. Short-distance discharges (*shocking grasp,* will-o-wisp attack, etc.) are not affected. Once planted, the rod cannot be moved without breaking it until the magic expires or is dispelled. The spell can be made permanent or used in conjunction with *enchant an item.* The material components are the rod, which is not consumed in the casting, and a piece of copper wire. ❑

Hey Humphree, I told you it was Phil! Randall Lemon lays it on thick during the Living City event—and drags Jean Rabe into the fray.

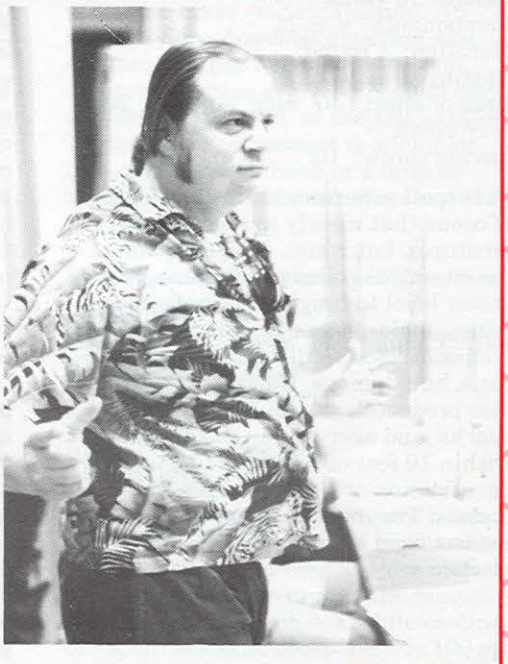
Here's the way it is Judge Lew Wright describes the final encounter in the AD&D® game Masters event.

Judge Steve Winter, USA (left) reads an encounter description during the AD&D game International event while players Peter Bangereth, Canada (center) and Wes Nicholson, Australia (right) digest the information.

Judge Frank Vetrovec takes a moment to enjoy the comforts of home in HQ.

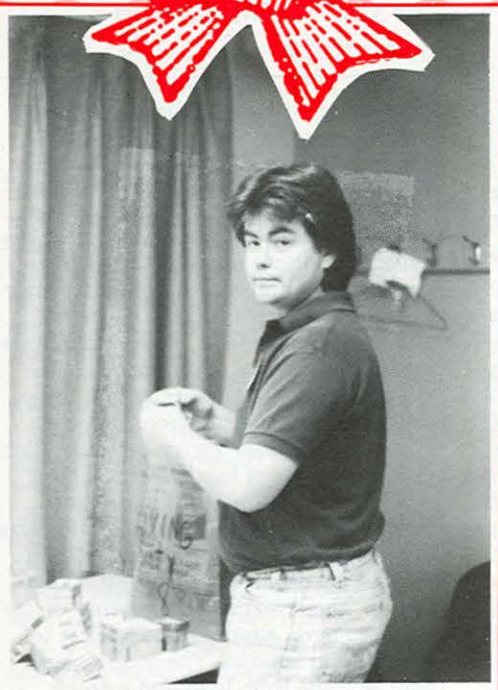
Dear HQ: When is the Network going intergalactic? Member John Holding, in Klingon guise, registers for the GEN CON® game fair's masquerade.

Freeze varmit! Toni Cobb takes aim at a Newszine staffer while John Reynolds looks on.



Come Here! Don Bingle goes for all the marbles in the Grand Masters event.

Season's Greetings



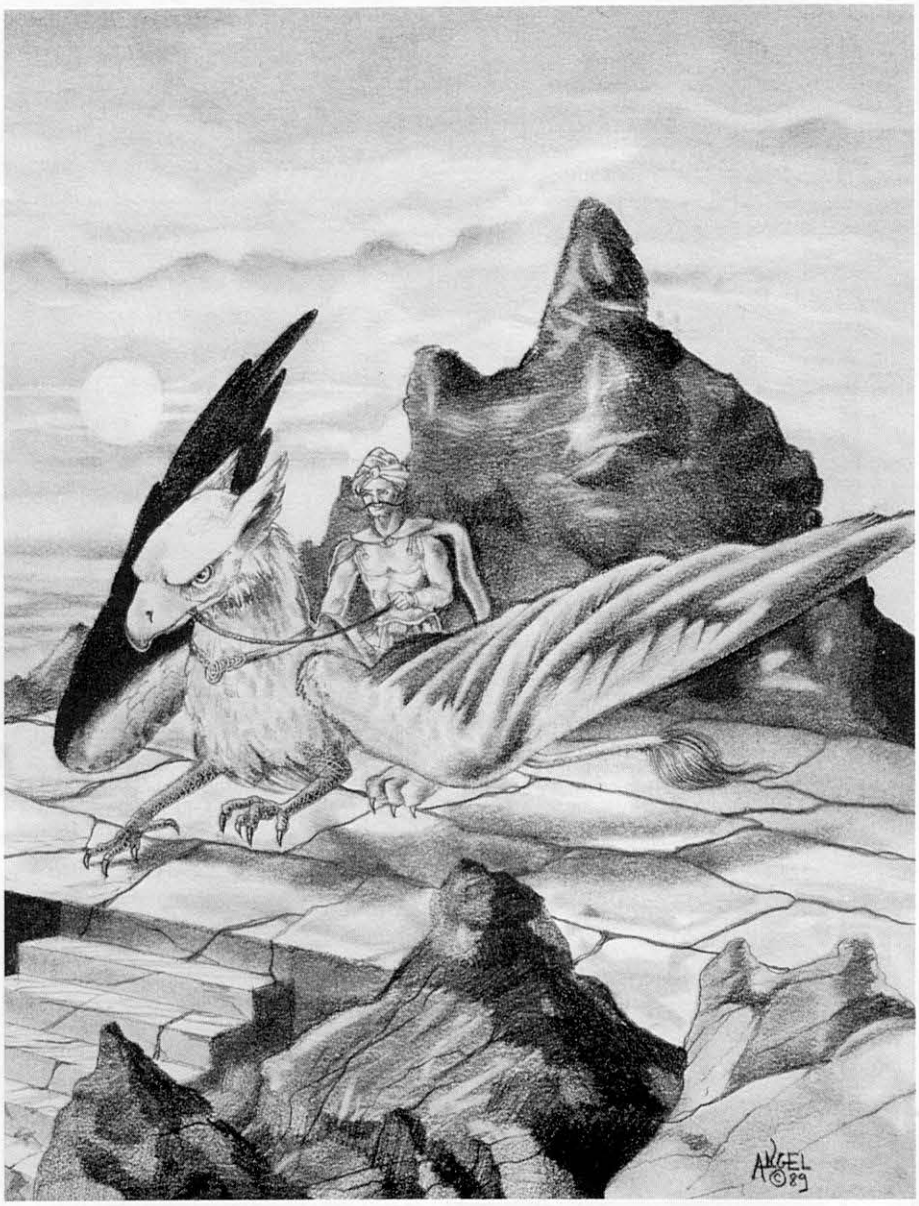
It's in the bag. Walt Baas helps pack HQ .

Judge Mike Vetrovec lays down the law during the Black Rose event.

Al Boyce, and his hat, preside over the AD&D® game Feature event.

More international players: Malcolm Wood, Canada (in hat), Heikki Holmaas, Norway (center), and Ida Shartsman, Israel (right).

Counterfeit Dreams



An AD&D® Game Adventure for 5–7 characters of levels 1–3

by Skip Williams and Jean Rabe

Notes for the DM

Verity Overinn is a scheming fighter/thief who runs a fencing operation and safehouse out of The Overinn, a business she operates near the river. To the general public it appears to be a run-down eatery and inn that caters to few people because it is small, cluttered, and serves lousy food. Verity's clientele primarily consists of thieves who are not attached to a thieves' guild, thugs, and people on the run from the law.

Two months ago Verity expanded her operation. One of her borders, a thief who escaped from the Ravens Bluff prison, was especially skilled in jewelry-making and metalworking. The thief and Verity began a counterfeit operation in The Overinn's basement. Verity's cook, an ogre, supplies the muscle to operate the bellows. The counterfeit gold is made from lead and a shiny brass that resembles gold. Verity purchases the brass—in the form of candlesticks—from a nearby business, and melts it down in the basement.

Verity sells the counterfeit gold for real coins at a ratio of 5-to-1 or 10-to-1, depending on how hard she wants to bargain and how wealthy or shrewd her clients are. In other words, for every real gold piece paid, the clients receive five to 10 counterfeit pieces. Verity instructs her clients how to spend the gold; in small amounts spread out over the city. Unfortunately, one of her clients didn't follow her instructions.

Mortimer Mittlemer, one of Ravens Bluff's more notorious con artists, purchased 4,000 counterfeit gold coins from Verity. Mortimer is unconcerned about Verity's wrath, as he is confident his ability to disguise himself will keep Verity and practically anyone else from finding him. Mortimer, in the guise of a city noble, offers the PCs a "substantial payment"—3,000 of the counterfeit coins—if they travel to one of the spires northeast of town where they will pick up six coffers that they are to take to the Ravens Bluff harbor. The PCs perform the task, are caught with the counterfeit gold, and are forced to find the origin of the fake coins in exchange for their freedom.

Introduction

Ravens Bluff.

It is a city teeming with life, excitement, and festivals.

It took a long while to travel to the city. But the journey was worth it. The city's buildings stretch to the sky, and the roads lead from bustling marketplaces and intriguing neighborhoods to the harbor, where each day ships unload palatable delicacies and unique and wondrous items from faraway places.

There are thousands of people here, and they come from many walks of life. Although the majority of the population is obviously human, there are several dwarves, gnomes, halflings, half elves, and elves who travel the city streets. Some of the demi-humans have their own businesses, such as taverns which serve specialty foods and rare wines.

In the few weeks you have been in the city you have sampled much of the food and entertainment available near the wharfs, and you participated in one of the street festivals where acrobats, jugglers, actors, and expert pickpockets plied their trades. Of course, partaking of all these wonderful things has been costly, as has been staying in one of the city's better establishments, Volodar's Stardust Inn.

In need of some quick wealth, and not wanting to leave Ravens Bluff so soon, you began to look for work, inquiring in a few of the taverns along the wharf, and quickly finding a prospect.

A representative of Lord Merriwether Winston Sheffield-Trublood the Third, heir to the Sheffield-Trublood estate and shipping line, informed you that his lordship had need of a small group of roguish-looking people to perform an errand—to pick up a trifle for him. The agent looked you over carefully and determined your appearance fit the lord's requirements. He scrutinized the fighters' muscles, furrowed his brow, and speculated that you probably could handle any problems you might run into. The agent instructed you to meet Lord Merriwether Winston Sheffield-Trublood the Third shortly after dawn on the morrow on the docks near The Golden Goddess, a large merchant vessel. The agent said you would be paid well for your trouble.

Pleased at the prospect of wealth, you agreed to the task and got a good night's sleep. It is now dawn, and the ships are only a few blocks away.

Encounter #1—Mortimer Merriwether

Lord Merriwether Winston Sheffield-Trublood the Third is actually con artist Mortimer Mittlemer in one of his numerous disguises. (In this case, he has taken on the appearance of Lord Charles Frederik Laverne Blacktree the Fourth, speaker of the advisory council and well-known fop.) Mortimer, a wizard who specializes in illusory magic, is having a set of six clay cylinders flown in by griffon to the peak northeast of the city. (He refers to them as coffers when speaking to the PCs.) These cylinders' contents were stolen by one of Mortimer's associates, and Mortimer has agreed to sell the merchandise for a 50% share.

Mortimer is having the cylinders flown to the peak because it is not uncommon for flying mounts to land there and drop off important visitors or noblemen or to deliver valuable items for the city's merchants. Mortimer feared a flying mount arriving anywhere else near Ravens Bluff could attract suspicion, something he can't afford.

Mortimer cannot go to the peak himself, as he is a wanted man in Ravens Bluff, and he does not want to travel through a few neighborhoods which are monitored by seasoned city watch members—some of whom might be able to see through Mortimer's disguises or *invisibility* spells. Nor does he want to accidentally become involved with the city's tax collector—The Vulture—or his staff, as Mortimer knows this man has ways of seeing through lies and deception. He feels much safer by the docks or by other entrances into the city which could provide him a quick avenue for escape.

Mortimer has been looking for a young group of adventurers to pick up his cylinders for him. That group happens to be the PCs.

You reach the docks to find Lord Merriwether Winston Sheffield-Trublood the Third waiting. At his side is the agent who contacted you about the mission. The Lord is dressed in a deep blue velvet cloak that falls in delicate folds to the dock planks. His dark purple tunic is also made of an expensive material, silk perhaps. It is decorated with gold braid and buttons. On his fair head is a broad-brimmed ink-black hat festooned with a long sky-blue feather. The lord's blond hair is short and curly, and his faint, blond mustache curls below his cheekbones. His dark brown eyes are piercing, but friendly. He smiles at your approach and extends a ring-encrusted hand.

"Good morning, kind sirs and gentle ladies," he says, removing his hat with his other hand and waving it before him as he bows. "I appreciate your promptness. My servant apparently has selected a fine group of young adventurers. I only hope that you are up to the task!"

The lord gestures at the newly-painted ship behind you. "This is the Golden Goddess, one of the many ships in my line. In four hours it sails for Ilipur, and I doubt my captain will want to wait for the coffers. You must get them here before sailing time. The coffers are being brought in by griffon early this morning, in an hour or so. I need you to retrieve them for me and bring them here. Your payment will be 500 gold pieces each, which is in this chest." Lord Merriwether indicates a chest sitting at his companion's feet. He holds up a key, uses it to unlock the chest, and reveals the golden contents. Locking the chest again, he hands you the key and waves to his companion who carries the chest onto the ship.

"When you bring the coffers to the captain, he will give you the chest. There, that should be simple enough. I cannot get the coffers myself, as traveling to and from the peak would require going through a poor section of town. I am well known in Ravens Bluff, and I do not want to be the target of every pickpocket, con man, or hoodlum within a one-mile radius. However, the pickpockets, con men, and hoodlums will not be looking for you. You must leave at once, as it is a good hour or so walk to the peak. Please be careful not to attract the attention of any low lifes or greedy peasants. I want the coffers intact."

If the PCs ask Lord Merriwether what is in the coffers, he shrugs, grins, and

replies, "A sad and precious thing, the residue of dreams. Handle them carefully lest your own dreams crumble away." He does not reveal anything else. Lord Merriwether becomes indignant if the PCs persist in their questioning; he storms onto the ship, with his companion following behind. The PCs will not be able to question the captain, as he is "somewhere in town picking up supplies." However, they can talk to the first mate or sailors.

The sailors are busy and don't have time to waste giving the PCs detailed—or accurate—answers. They say they have heard of Lord Merriwether. (They want to seem in-the-know about Ravens Bluff nobles.) If asked if Lord Merriwether is the owner of the Golden Goddess, the sailors reply yes. They heard the lord talking with the captain about purchasing the ship, a fact they won't reveal to the PCs, and they assume the captain is going to take the lord's offer. Mortimer/Merriwether had talked to the captain about buying this ship, for an incredibly large sum. This is just Mortimer's way of conning the captain into doing his bidding; waiting for the cylinders if the PCs are delayed in bringing them to the ship.

Mortimer Mittlemer, male human specialist mage, 8th level: STR 9, INT 16, WIS 16, CON 10, DEX 17, CHR 10; AL CN; MV 12; AC 2, AC Rear 5; hp 25; #AT 1; D staff; S M; THAC0 16

Magic Items: *Bracers of defense AC 5, hat of disguise, dagger +3, dust of disappearance, ring of animal friendship, potion of extra healing, potion of water breathing*

Spells Carried: *audible glamer, phantasmal force, ventriloquism, alter self* (x2),*hypnotic pattern, invisibility, non detection, fly, hold person, suggestion, improved invisibility, illusionary wall, emotion*

Mortimer Mittlemer is a notorious con artist who is ever developing new scams. Mortimer's present scam is posing as a Ravens Bluff noble. Mortimer is always convincing in his roles, as he chooses them carefully and practices them on his associates before trying them out in public. Mortimer is a specialist wizard, relying primarily on spells from the school of illusion.

Elmerth Willowit, male half elven thief, 5th level (Mortimer's assistant): STR 17, INT 7, WIS 6, DEX 18, CON 18, CHR 10; MV 12; hp 30; AC 3, AC rear 7; #AT 1; D dagger; S M; THAC0 18

Magic Items: *Bracers of Defense AC 7, Dagger +2, Dust of Disappearance* (2 uses)

Thief Abilities:

PP	OL	FT	MS	HS	DN	CW	RL	BS
95	55	40	50	50	25	60	—	x3

Elmerth is Mortimer's assistant and considers the wizard his most trusted friend. Elmerth willingly participates in any scam Mortimer develops. In his current role, Elmerth is portraying an employee of Lord Merriwether.

Encounter #2—Coffering It Up

The walk to the peak will be uneventful. However, allow the player characters to take any precautions or discuss strategies for transporting the coffers. Neither will the PCs have any encounters on the return trip to the docks, unless they initiate them. This is explained in the **On The Street** section.

> The city streets are beginning to come to life as you walk toward the peak. Bakeries are throwing their doors open for business, the scents of their fresh goods waft through the air, teasing your appetites. Dockhands pull carts loaded with imported merchandise to shops where workers are preparing to greet a new day's customers. In the background you hear the playful cries of children intermingled with yips of dogs and the scolding tones of impatient mothers. A city watchman tips his hat to you as you proceed up the street. You can see a few other watch members patrolling the neighborhood. Looking down side streets you see merchants boxing trash behind their shops and children playing catch against stucco walls.
>
> Beneath your feet the cobblestones change from deep red to burnt orange as the sun peeks over the rooftops. In the sky ahead of you rises the peak where aerial mounts land. Something is landing there now, perhaps the griffon.
>
> It's a long, tiring climb up the steps to the landing area, but the cool morning breeze helps keep you from breaking into a sweat. Large, dark birds, probably ravens, fly high above the summit. Ahead is the landing area. A griffon and rider await you. A large bag rests at the rider's feet.

> The rider is dressed in a long forest green robe decorated with white embroidery. He wears a tall off-white turban with a silver and onyx brooch pinned to the front. Like Lord Merriwether, this man has a mustache, but his is long and waxed, extending in points a few inches on both sides of his face. His small brown eyes regard you cooly.

The rider, who is going by the name Sir Warden Jameson of the Crusade Society, does not initiate a conversation with the PCs; they must address him. He knows Mortimer/Merriwether was going to send a representative or two to pick up the cylinders. However, he was not expecting this many people. When the PCs begin talking to him he attempts to make certain they are indeed representatives of his partner. He asks them who hired them, what their employer looked like (even though he has no idea what Mortimer's current appearance is), and he asks to see the PCs' key. When he is satisfied, he gives the PCs the large sack at his feet and leaves. If they question him about the contents of the cylinders inside the sack, he becomes snobbish and tells them, "It is up to Lord Merriwether if he wishes the contents made public knowledge to rogues." If for any reason the PCs attack or threaten Jameson, he uses his *ring of invisibility* to cover his escape via the griffon; the cylinders are left behind.

Jameson, if he was not forced to escape, tells the PCs to be careful transporting the cylinders through town, as they are quite valuable, and thieves would be happy to relieve the PCs of them. He cautions the PCs not to mention Lord Merriwether, as there are bad factions within the city which seek to settle a score with the man. He will not elaborate.

The glossy black ceramic cylinders are each about 12 inches tall and weigh about eight pounds. They are sealed at one end with brass caps. The coffers are nearly identical, differing only slightly because each was handmade. Also, they are numbered, one through six, in plain white paint.

Only one of the cylinders contains treasure; it is filled with the priceless emerald collection of a wealthy lord who lives near Shadowdale. The emeralds are wrapped in leather and packed in sand. The remainder of the cylinders contain plain rocks and sand; each cylinder weighs the same. All of the cylin-

ders have had *glassteel* cast on them. The brass caps have mechanical locks. The locks have twin studs which must be depressed simultaneously to open them, and the caps have been sealed with wax on the inside and have been *wizard locked*. Furthermore, each cylinder has several *magic mouth* spells cast on it. If anyone begins casting a *knock* spell within 60 yards of a cylinder, or tries to break into a cylinder, that cylinder will begin screaming for help, sounding very much like a terrified young woman: "Help! Help! Help! No! Don't touch me! Noooo! Not that! Help! Oh please anybody! Hel. . . ." The last word is cut off and accompanied by a strangled gasp. This performance will draw the attention of passersby even in Crow's End. The only way to open the cylinders, short of breaking them open, is to heat them until the wax melts, then cast a *knock* spell to temporarily negate the *wizard lock*, and then open the locked cap. Note that a single *knock* spell preforms only two functions. If the PCs cast a single knock spell on a cylinder they temporarily negate the *wizard lock* (for one turn), and depress the studs (which spring back after one round), but nothing else happens. There is no visible indication that the *wizard lock* is present or has been negated. Note also that if a PC tries to open a cylinder after it has been *knocked*, but before the wax has been melted, he is breaking into the cylinder and will trigger another *magic mouth*.

Stealing the Cylinders: Mortimer, being a con man himself, has left nothing to chance. As soon as the PCs left the ship, he had another associate go to the city watch headquarters to report the cylinders stolen. If the watch catches the PCs with the cylinders, or if the PCs try to sell them (or have them examined or identified), they will be arrested for theft, and the cylinders will be confiscated. If this happens, Mortimer's agent claims the cylinders and offers to drop all charges against the PCs in return for the cylinders' immediate return. Since the Living City courts tend to be overworked, this offer is accepted, but the PCs still will be in hot water.

Sir Warden Jameson, male human, 5th level fighter: AC 4 (chain and Dex); MV 9"; hp 56; #AT 1; D 1-8 +2 (Str bonus); AL CN; S M; THAC0 16

Griffon: AC 3; MV 12/30; HD 7; hp 42; #AT 3; D 1-4/1-4/2-16; AL N; S L; THAC0 13

Encounter #3—On The Street/ At The Docks

The following events are normal occurrences, which the PCs might mistake for potential trouble. If the PCs do not act on any of these situations, they will reach the docks quickly and without incident.

1. A drunken dock worker has just stumbled out of a tavern where he has spent most of his money and most of the night. In his present state he mistakes one of the PCs for a long-lost friend. He is accompanied by a fellow dock worker who also has had quite a bit to drink, but is not as many sheets to the wind.

> "Hey! Heyyyyyy Phil!" The loud eruption is directed at your group. A man staggering out of a doorway shuffles toward you, bellowing and waving his arms. Another man in dark clothes follows. "Hey, Phil. Whatcha doin here, Phil? Howya doin pal? Ain't seen you for some time. Humphree, see I told you it was Phil. Hey, Phil!"

The drunk cannot be dissuaded through any rational attempt at conversation. He honestly believes one of the PCs is his friend, Phil. His companion has never met Phil, so he cannot vouch for the drunk or the PCs. The PCs can avoid too much of a scene if they: dispatch the drunk and his friend quickly in an alley, use spells such as *sleep* or *command*, or walk quickly away (the inebriated gentlemen can't keep up).

Drunken Dock Worker: AC 10; MV 6" (because of his drunkeness); HD 1 (0 level); hp 5; #AT nil; AL CG; S M; THAC0 nil

Dock Worker's Friend: AC 9; MV 9" (because of his half drunkeness); HD 1 (0 level); hp 6; #AT 1; D 1-4 (dagger); AL CG; S M; THAC0 20

2. An ox-drawn cart overturns in the middle of the street, scattering heads of cabbage everywhere and slowing pedestrian traffic. The accident draws quite a crowd, including a few peasants who are trying to make off with some of the cabbages. At the same time, three young rough-looking men come up behind the PCs. The young men are on their way to the docks to look for work, urged on by parents who are tired of supporting them. They are ill-tempered and pushy, but they aren't looking for a fight.

Rough-Looking Men: AC 10; MV 12; HD 1 (0 level); hp 5 each; #AT 1; D 1-4 (knives); AL CG; S M; THAC0 20

3. A young man who dreams of being an adventurer has started following the PCs. He is scrutinizing their manner and their speech, as he is certain from their appearance they are adventurers. If the PCs turn to watch him or start to move back toward him, he pretends to study something in a store window. If a PC tries to talk to him or gets too close, he tries to run away.

Curious Young Man: AC 8; MV 12; HD 1 (0 level); hp 4; #AT 1; D 1-2 (fist); AL NG; S M; THAC0 20

When the PCs reach the docks, no matter how long they took traveling to or from the peak, the Golden Goddess will be preparing to leave port. The PCs cannot find Lord Merriwether or his associate, but they can speak with the captain. The captain instructs the PCs that Lord Merriwether is not on the ship, nor will he be riding on the ship to Ilipur. However, the captain will insist on taking the lord's cylinders, and if the PCs can produce their key, he will hand over the chest of gold. The captain was paid handsomely not to let the PCs ride on his ship, and he will not take kindly to the PCs' bothering him. He is the captain and demands respect. The captain has the chest carried to the dock and orders the crew to leave port.

If for some reason the PCs refuse to give up the cylinders, the captain threatens to call the city watch, as the cylinders belong to Lord Merriwether, and he knows the PCs were hired to bring them to the ship. If the PCs still refuse, enough city watch members appear to confiscate the cylinders, the chest, and the PCs. If this happens, proceed to Encounter #5.

Mortimer/Merriwether is invisibly watching the ship leave. After it is far out in the harbor, he casts a *fly* spell and flies out to meet it. There, he picks up the cylinder filled with emeralds and begins his journey to Procampur to sell the gems. If the PCs refused to hand over the coffers, and everything is confiscated by the city watch, Mortimer sends an agent to watch headquarters to recover the "stolen" cylinders. (See Stealing the Cylinders in Encounter #2). In any event, the PCs will not

encounter Mortimer again in this adventure.

If the PCs accept the chest as their payment, they must decide whether to open it on the docks, where sailors and dock workers are watching, or in another location, such as their room at the Stardust Inn.

The box, although it appears valuable and well-made, is shoddy and weak. However, the PCs will not notice this unless someone specifically states they are inspecting the workmanship of the box. Checking it for locks and traps will not suffice. If the PCs do not carry the box carefully or put it inside something else, such as a large sack, they will not have a choice where to open it; the box simply will fall apart, and the PCs will have to deal with scooping up the coins and keeping nosey sailors, dock workers, and begging urchins away. There is a total of 3,000 counterfeit gold coins in the box. To the PCs' untrained eyes, these will appear to be regular Ravens Bluff currency.

Encounter #4—All That Glitters Might Be Counterfeit

In this encounter the PCs are going to learn their payment is counterfeit. There are several ways this revelation can come crashing down upon them.

Spending The Gold: If the PCs stop along the way to buy something from a peddler, purchase something to eat, or stop to get equipment, the merchant, a burly sort with a loud voice, plays with the coin. The merchant does this as a force of habit, not because he has been plagued by counterfeit coins. The man simply picks up the money, casually twirls the coin between his fingers, and becomes immediately irate when he notices the lead core visible at the edge.

> "What is this? What IS this? This is junk! This isn't real gold! There's lead inside this coin." He gives the coin a furious twist and tears the coin in half. "What are you trying to pass off? Guards! Guards!"
>
> Before you can recover from your surprise, several uniformed fighters move up and level swords at you. They bark at you to surrender.

Paying The Inn Bill: If the PCs spend some of the gold at the Stardust Inn to take care of their bill, they will not be caught as quickly. The worker at the desk will take their money, and the PCs will get to start up the stairs to their rooms or head toward the door to the outside. A treasury representative who has been stationed at the Stardust Inn because counterfeit coins turned up in the gambling area will inspect the PCs' coinage as soon as they walk away from the desk. He will motion to a group of plainclothes guards and have the PCs apprehended.

Doing Nothing: If the player characters take the money upstairs to their room or go elsewhere and do not spend it, eventually the tax collector's men will come and apprehend them. The men have been following leads on the counterfeit coins and have traced some of the coins to the docks (where Mortimer paid out some money in his ruse as Lord Merriwether). They learned from dock hands the PCs received a large chest reputedly filled with gold from a wealthy ship's passenger, and they want to inspect the chest.

In any case, there will be too many men of too high of level for the PCs to argue with. The gold will be inspected, found to be phony, and the PCs will be taken into custody.

City Watch: The city watch is primarily comprised of 1st through 4th level fighters. The watch also employs mages and a few clerics. Members of the watch usually are posted in pairs throughout the city. Each member has a tin whistle with a distinct sound. When the whistle is blown, 4-16 additional watch members arrive in 1d4 rounds.

Depending on the circumstances, more members of the watch can be found together, such as a unit of 10 or 12, especially if watch members are investigating potentially dangerous situations.

The DM should select his watch members from the following, taking into account the strength of the PCs and the force needed to steer them to The Vulture, and further into the adventure. The easiest way to get the party to The Vulture is to have a mage, accompanied by a 4th level fighter for protection, arrive and hit them with a *sleep* spell.

Typical first level fighter: AC 4 (chain and shield); MV 9; HD 1; hp 10; #AT 1; D 1-8; AL varies, but good; S M; THAC0 20

Typical second level fighter: AC 4 (chain and shield); MV 9; HD 2; hp 20; #AT 1; D 1-8; AL varies, but good; S M; THAC0 19

Typical third level fighter: AC 3 (chain and shield, one of which is +1); MV 9; HD 3; hp 28; #AT 1; D 1-8; AL varies, but good; S M; THAC0 18

Typical fourth level fighter: AC 3 (chain and shield, one of which is +1); MV 9; HD 4; hp 35; #AT 1; D 1-8 +2 (Str bonus and or magic weapon); AL varies, but good; S M; THAC0 16 (adjusted for Str or magic weapon)

Typical first level mage: AC 7 (bracers and/or Dex); MV 12; HD 1; hp 4 #AT 1; D 1-4; AL varies, but good; S M; THAC0 20; Spells—*sleep*

Typical second level mage: AC 5 (bracers and Dex); MV 12; HD 2; hp 8; #AT 1; D 1-4; AL varies, but good; S M; THAC0 20; Items—*potion of flying, potion of healing*; Spells—*Charm Person, Sleep*

Typical third level mage: AC 4 (bracers and Dex); MV 12; HD 3; hp 12; #AT 1; D 1-4; AL varies, but good; S M; THAC0 20; Items—*potion of flying, potion of healing, boots of elvenkind*; Spells—*Charm Person, Sleep, Web*

Typical fourth level mage: AC 4 (bracers and Dex); MV 12; HD 3; hp 14; #AT 1; D 1-4; AL varies, but good; S M; THAC0 20; Items—*wand of magic missiles, potion of flying, potion of healing, boots of elvenkind*; Spells—*Charm Person, Sleep, Sleep, ESP, Web*

Encounter #5—The Vulture Strikes

If the PCs were arrested for not turning over Lord Merriwether's coffers, they eventually will be brought before The Vulture and asked to perform a task in exchange for their freedom.

They will be asked to perform this same task if they were caught by any of the methods in Encounter #4 for passing off or being in the possession of counterfeit coins.

The Vulture is in charge of Ravens Bluff's tax collection department. The three dozen tax collection agents and treasury marshals under him enforce The Vulture's policies and the city's tax laws. The agents and marshals hunt down tax evaders; investigate fraud, including counterfeiting; and assess property and records for tax purposes.

The Vulture, whose real name is Vernon Condor, is a stoop-shouldered bald-headed man with a long, crooked nose. His black beady eyes, small ears,

and deep, gravely voice make him seem almost malevolent. His skin is smooth, so it is difficult to guess his age. Vernon has come to accept his nickname, The Vulture, in part because he believes the moniker helps to strike fear in the public's heart. And like the carrion bird which is fast upon the injured and dying, The Vulture is quick to swoop down on those who break the tax laws. He has spells and magic items at his disposal which help him ascertain the truth about possible offenders.

You are taken into one of Ravens Bluff's several government buildings, herded like animals by your fast-walking guards. They lead you to a large door, which bears a sign reading: "Vernon Condor, regent of the exchequer." You've heard of him. The man is called The Vulture, the head of Ravens Bluff's tax collection department. You know you are in trouble to be brought before this man instead of one of his lackeys.

A guard pushes open the door, revealing a large room rimmed with shelves. The shelves are filled with books, scrolls, and reams of loose parchment. At the back of the room, in the center, looms a massive, dark desk. The Vulture sits behind it, looking very small as he bends over a mound of papers. Without straightening, he crooks his head up to look at you. As his small, black eyes bore into you, it is easy to see how The Vulture got his name. His bald head softly shines in the light from the oil lamp on his desk, and his long, crooked nose resembles a sharp beak. His voice rattles like dry gravel in a tin bucket when he speaks to you.

"Counterfeit coins," he says.

"You were found in the possession of counterfeit coins—a small horde of them. That is a crime in Ravens Bluff, and it carries a hefty penalty. Others who have cheated the city and its merchants in this fashion are in the quarries. I hope you like quarries." The Vulture glances at the papers in front of him, he shifts on his perch, and settles down again. "We have approximately 158 and a half tons of granite and 457 and a third tons of marble in the quarries. The people who work there are adept at making big rocks into small rocks. I am certain you could quickly learn that skill, too. And you'll have several years to perfect your rock smashing techniques. And if you should think yourself ill-used during those years, you'll be able to comfort yourself with the knowledge that the person or persons who made those coins involuntarily fed the ravens—if he, she, or them got caught."

He shuffles the papers, makes a note on one of the sheets, and his eyes bore into you again. "Or," he says, "we could talk. About the coins. There are sometimes alternatives to the quarries."

The Vulture questions the PCs about how they came into possession of so many counterfeit coins. The PCs are expected to be respectful and to give complete, straightforward answers. Because of The Vulture's *ring of truth*, he can tell if the PCs are lying. If the PCs were not in possession of the coins, but were holding onto "Lord Merriwether's" cylinders, he will give them a speech similar to the one above, dwelling gleefully on the quarries. In either event, the PCs will be assigned the task of ferreting out the counterfeiters.

The PCs will not be able to escape from the room, nor can they get at The Vulture or any objects in the room because they are completely surrounded by a spherical *wall of force*. Any time a PC makes an attempt to leave or accost The Vulture, The Vulture mentions something about the quarries. A PC foolish enough to lunge for the door or for The Vulture brains himself on the *wall of force*.

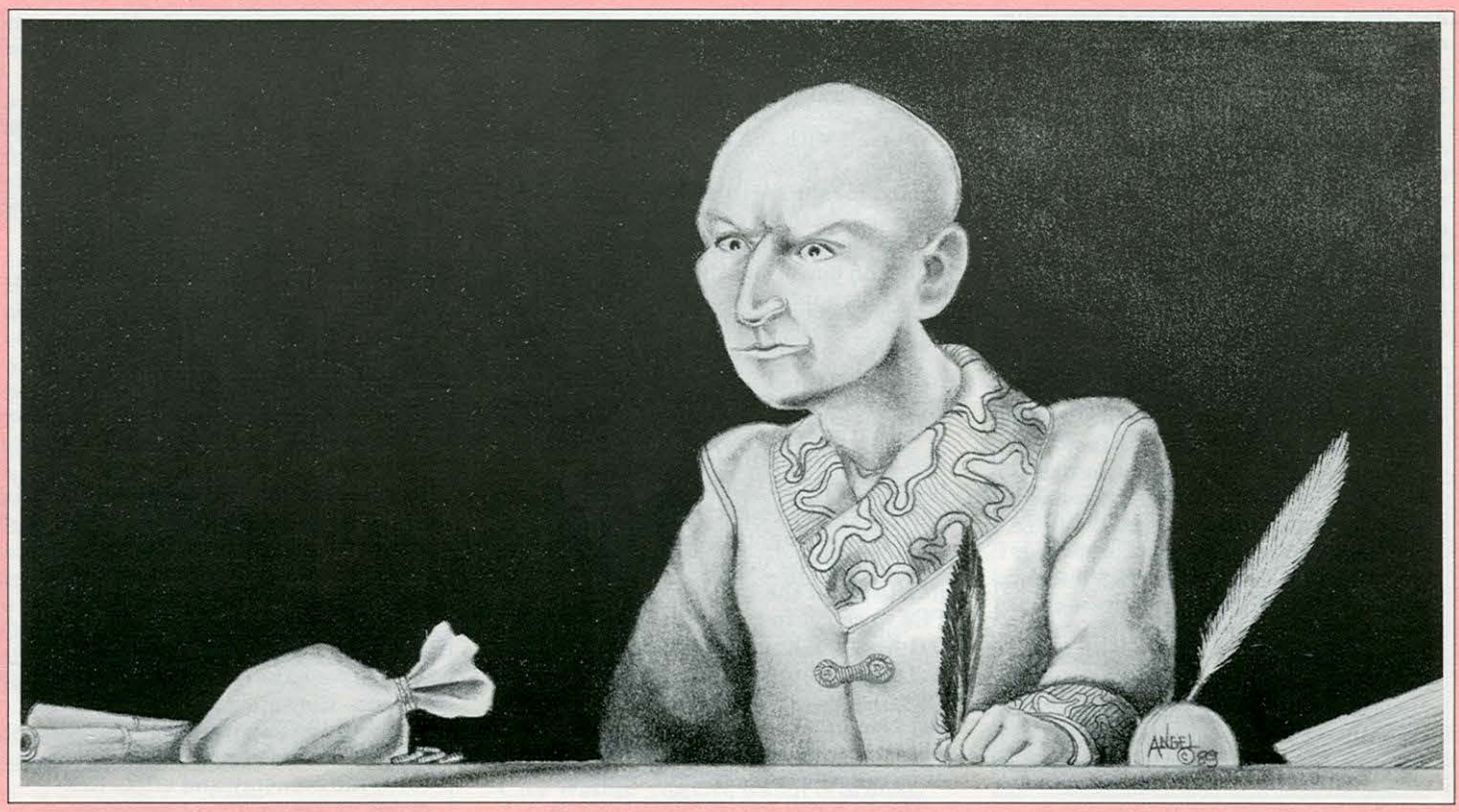
If the PCs explain about Lord Merriwether, the coffers, and the ship, The Vulture agrees to check into the matter, speculating that Lord Merriwether could be a fraud. The Vulture believes he is familiar with all the nobles in the city. The Vulture asks for a careful description of Merriwether. Compare the PCs' answer with the description given them at the docks. If the PCs recite it correctly, the usually unperturbable Vulture looks profoundly surprised, muses for a moment, and finally announces: "Merriwether probably was a charlatan in disguise." If the PCs botch the description, The Vulture merely shrugs and promises to look into the matter.

"So it's to the streets then instead of the quarries. A good choice. The quarries make men and women age quickly." The Vulture rises from his chair, his shoulders still stooped. "I want you to help us find the root of the counterfeit operation. I fear the counterfeiters know what my agents look like. You need to just be yourselves."

If the PCs suggest that the counterfeiters probably know what they look like, The Vulture disagrees. "I suspect you have been duped by a flunky or an associate, the real counterfeiters are still well hidden I'm sure."

"I believe the operation is centered along the Fire River, in a small commercial district. We have traced a couple of the counterfeit coins to that neighborhood, although we have not yet been able to determine how the coins are getting into circulation. We know the thieves guilds are not behind the operation. Some of the thieves we have contact with are furious—they stole the stuff thinking it good gold. They are also worried, as the counterfeit operation could harm the economy and affect the guilds' business. It would please me to upset the criminal guilds, but not at the expense of the entire mercantile system. Counterfeit coins are a plague to the city's economy. And the counterfeit operation is a disease that must be wiped out immediately. The coins you had in your possession were made of lead and coated with a special brass that has the appearance of gold. There is a dwarven smith who deals in brass. That might be the place to start. Here are directions to get there. Since the dwarf probably isn't the counterfeiter, one of his customers might be.

"Consider yourselves temporary agents of my office. If you feel the need to report on your progress, leave a message at your inn. Perhaps I will be able to report on our progress of checking into this Lord Merriwether. It is important that you exercise care in your investigation and do not broadcast your association with my office. Such an announcement will make the counterfeit trail turn to ice. Also, I do not condone undue violence. If you get into unnecessary fights you will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. You won't help yourselves at all if you destroy, maim, or kill during this



investigation. Of course, I realize you might have to defend yourselves, and if a fight is forced on you I can help you avoid embarrassing questions. Needless to say, you do not have the authority to make arrests. Just get the information.

"In addition to keeping you out of the quarries, my office will see that you get any rewards due you if you crack this case. You had best get started now."

The Vulture can show the PCs how to identify the counterfeit coins, indicating a thin line of lead that is visible around the coins' edges. Breaking open the coins, which are softer than the Ravens Bluff Mint coins, also will reveal the lead.

If the PCs want more information about the coins, The Vulture tells them they were noticed in circulation about four weeks ago, which means they probably have been around longer than that. However, it took that long before merchants noticed the coins were phony and before some of the coins trickled into the tax offices. The Vulture is not impressed with the workmanship on the coins. But he believes few of the merchants look at their coins with a magnifying glass to spot the flaws (not to mention just looking at the edges, where the lead clearly is visible). He does not want to waste much time with the PCs, as he is very busy with the counterfeit investigation and other problems.

If, after visiting at least one business, the PCs return to Volodar's Stardust Inn to drop off a report about anything they learned in the neighborhood, the PCs find a report from The Vulture saying that Lord Merriwether definitely is not a real lord. The man was masquerading as a lord to get the PCs to do his bidding. The Golden Goddess is not owned by any lord; it is owned by its captain.

Use statistics for 4th level city watch members from Encounter #4 for The Vulture's marshals, 3rd level statistics for the agents.

The Vulture, Vernon Condor, male human, 4th level fighter, 12th level mage: STR 16, INT 18, WIS 17, DEX 12, CON 12, CHR 10; MV 12; hp 49; AC 0; AL LG; S M; THAC0 17

Magic Items: *Bracers of defense AC 0, ring of truth, ring of warmth, wings of flying, amulet of proof against detection and location, boots of elvenkind, eyes of the eagle, long sword +2* (detects precious metals, minerals, and gems in a 30-foot radius)

Spells Carried: *Change Self, Charm Person, Detect Magic, Message, Detect Evil, Knock, Web, Stinking Cloud, Clairaudience, Clairvoyance, Hold Person, Slow, Detect Scrying, Dimension Door, Polymorph Self, Wizard Eye, Bigby's Interposing Hand, Feeblemind, Telekinesis, Wall of Force, Anti-Magic Shell*

Vernon Condor, who is known to the public as The Vulture, was born to a wealthy Ravens Bluff family who made sure he received the best education possible. Condor loved schooling and immersed himself in law books and history books. Condor planned on becoming a lawyer or politician. However, a group of close friends encouraged him to see the world first. He adventured with his small group of friends for six years, becoming a skilled fighter and then switching his studies to magic. When his parents died he returned to Ravens Bluff to inherit his estate. He settled down and began to study again, specializing this time in economics, while he kept increasing his magical knowledge. As he observed and studied

the Living City's economy, be became impressed with the positive effects brought by Mayor O'Kane's efficient and uncorrupt leadership. He began to form his own economic theories, and began to advocate a strong, mercantilistic government with a steady income from an equitable tax system. Such a government, he reasons, is the only entity capable of maintaining all the city interests simultaneously. He also reasons that unfairness and corruption channels money away from vital projects and undermines confidence in the system.

By the time he was 35 local politicians began seeking his advice on tax matters. Two years later he was appointed the city tax collector—a position he has held for 10 years.

Vernon is happier now than he ever was before. He is surrounded by the things he loves most: money, laws, and power. Vernon is a just official, greatly respected by the other city officials, admired by many in town, and feared and shunned by those who oppose taxes or who try to avoid paying them. The Vulture's policies are fair, with people taxed based on their incomes and personal wealth. The destitute and unemployed are not taxed, unless the unemployed are well off and have personal wealth and land. The Vulture strictly enforces his policies, and ruthlessly brings to justice all tax evaders, counterfeiters, and embezzlers he can find. He is in charge of a group of men and women who patrol Ravens Bluff in search of offenders and investigate counterfeiting, fraud, and tax evasion.

Encounter #6—It's A Dutiful Day In The Neighborhood

The *Cities of Mystery* building fold-ups can be used for this portion of the scenario. Select buildings to represent each business detailed in the neighborhood. Additional buildings can be set up to give the area the appearance of a neighborhood and so the PCs are not clued to the fact that only certain buildings should be visited.

The neighborhood the PCs are directed to is a small commercial district near the Fire River. There are several businesses in this neighborhood, including a few taverns, inns, a stable, and a dry goods store. However, these businesses are not detailed for this adventure. They are dead ends for the PCs. The following buildings provide encounters and leads for the PCs.

Brasshand's Foundry, a dwarven smith runs this business, which is the source of all brass in this neighborhood.

Bold As Brass, a statuary shop. It purchases its materials from the dwarven smith.

Dressed To The Nines, a jewelry and accessory shop. The proprietor pays the owner of Bold As Brass to make small, custom brass items, which Dressed To The Nines in turn sells.

Ember Me More, a shop that sells only accoutrements for fireplaces. As a side business the proprietor and his brother build fireplaces. The shop gets its brass items from the gnomes who work for the smith.

Lamps By Watt, a lighting shop. It orders its brass merchandise from the gnomes who work for the smith.

The final encounter takes place in one of the warehouse districts, far removed from the site of the PCs' investigations:

The Overinn, an establishment that masquerades as an inn. Verity Overinn, the owner, also purchases her brass from the gnomes.

Brasshand's Foundry

This 20-year-old establishment takes up nearly a third of a city block. The foundry is a large stone and wood structure with a water wheel. The front of the building has a set of big double doors, and there are barred windows all around. The building sits on the edge of a barren yard that is filled with piles of coal, scrap metal, and rocks. Four well-groomed dogs with studded brass collars lay chained in the yard, and watch each passerby's every move. The complex is ringed by a 12-foot-high, barbed fence. The front gate is open during business hours. When the foundry is closed the dogs are unchained.

The proprietor is Althjof Lah Brasshand, a 114-year-old dwarf who lives in the upper floor of the building. He is the only smith in this section of Ravens Bluff who deals in brass. In fact, he has developed a special type of brass which shines like gold. Brasshand is a black-bearded, swarthy complected 7th level fighter who talks in loud, staccato sentences. He is used to talking loud because of the noise in the foundry. He talks even louder to those taller than himself; it makes him feel more important. He speaks softer to the half-dozen gnomes in his employ.

Brasshand's brass business is a front. The dwarf's primary business is trafficking in gold. He processes gold ore for customers, usually dwarvish and gnomish prospectors, who do not want to register their finds, and he melts down gold items into ingots and bars. He prospects for gold occasionally himself, and buys ore. He turns his ore into ingots and sells it to jewelers. Even those watching the foundry cannot tell that gold is going in and out. The dwarf is very careful and secretive about his real business. Brasshand's personal wealth is stored in a secret compartment in his living room upstairs. The compartment contains 24,000 gp worth of gold ingots, 15,000 worth of small gems, a *short sword +2* that detects minerals and gems in a 20′ radius when the command word "find" is spoken, and 300 gp worth of gold, silver, and copper pieces. In a hidden compartment in the desk in his office Brasshand keeps the foundry's wealth: 450 gp, 210 sp, and 40 cp.

Brasshand supplies brass to Bold As Brass, a statuary shop, and to his gnome employees who operate their own brass molding and smithing business on the foundry grounds. He gets a 20% share of their income in exchange for their business space rental.

When the PCs visit the foundry, they will find Althjof Brasshand arguing with his gnome employees. He claims they spend too much time on their own piece work than on the foundry work he is paying them for. When the PCs get his attention he becomes very business-like and begins to talk louder—if the PCs are taller than he is.

> Coal smoke fills the air inside the foundry building. Etchings of dwarves, framed in brass, line the walls in the office. In the large room beyond you can make out several furnaces and bellows. A few gnomes are at work near the furnaces. Behind the low counter in the office a dwarf is arguing with a couple of gnomes. "Back to business, mind you. You're on my time now. You're working for me. Quit spending so much of my time on your own piece work. Keep it up and I'll kick you and your molding business out the door. You can be replaced." When the dwarf notices you, he stops yelling, dismisses the pair of gnomes with a wave, and looks up at you. The gnomes move to a small desk to the side of the office and begin poring over a stack of papers.

> The dwarf raises his voice even louder when he addresses you. "Yes? Can I help you?"

The dwarf wants to sell the PCs some brass. He knows if they were looking for gold they would have approached him differently and began the conversation by placing a lump of ore on the counter. He insults them in his efforts to hawk his brass. "Is that a rivet?" he asks, pointing to a PC's armor. "What happened to your equipment, someone pelt it with a rock?" "I can fix that for a small fee." "Where did you buy THAT?"

If the PCs ask Brasshand where he sells his brass, he immediately becomes suspicious, believing they are checking out his clients in an effort to steal them away. When the PCs leave his shop, Brasshand directs three of his gnomes to follow the PCs. See "Gnome Assault." Brasshand will give the PCs very little satisfaction or information, unless they say they want to talk to one of his customers to see if the customer is satisfied with Brasshand's brass. In this case, he will refer them to Bold As Brass, a statuary shop.

If the PCs mention counterfeit gold, Brasshand becomes irate, thinking they are accusing him of selling shoddy or counterfeit goods or of trafficking in counterfeit coins. Brasshand has heard rumors of a counterfeit operation in the city, and has even received a few bad coins, but he does not know anything about the operation. Furthermore, Brasshand has not made the connection between his special gold-looking brass and the brass on the counterfeit coins. He wants the PCs out of his business quickly if they persist in their counterfeit questions.

If the PCs attack Brasshand, he and his employees will return the assault. They will try not to kill the PCs, as Brasshand does not want any guards to examine his business too closely. However, if Brasshand and the gnomes can subdue the PCs, they will turn the PCs over to city watch members, who eventually turn the PCs over to The Vulture again.

The PCs will have the best luck if they talk to the gnome employees. The gnomes' lips are a little looser, especially if the PCs make an order for molded brass items. Two of the gnomes will take time to deal with the PCs, talking quickly and softly because they do not want Brasshand to find out they are promoting their own business on Brasshand's time. The other four gnomes are hard at work in the foundry; three of these gnomes will be involved in the "Gnome Assault."

If the PCs ask the right questions and treat the gnomes well, they can learn that:

* The gnomes have worked for Brasshand for about the past five years. Two years ago they opened their own business within the foundry—Gnomoldings Limited. Their client list is small, but the business is steady enough to provide a good income.

* They purchase brass from Brasshand and mold or hammer it to their clients' specifications. They are especially pleased with the recent brass that Brasshand developed; it looks like gold and they can charge more for it.

*The gnomes make fireplace accoutrements, such as pokers and tongs, for Ember Me More, a fireplace store. They usually put out a large order for the store every other week.

*The gnomes' biggest customer is Lamps By Watt, a lighting shop. They make candleholders, lanterns, and oil lamps for the place.

*The gnomes know other stores deal with brass, such as Bold As Brass, a statuary shop. They aren't real pleased with the shop, as they know Bold As Brass sells some brass items to Dressed To The Nines. Eventually the gnomes hope to add The Nines to their list of customers.

Altjhof Lah Brasshand, male dwarf, 7th level fighter: STR 18/70, INT 13, WIS 12, DEX 17, CON 18, CHR 12; hp 65 AC 4, AC Rear 7; AL CN: S M; THAC0 14

Magic Items: *Long sword +2, bracers of defense AC 7, ring of fire resistance, wand of metal and mineral detection* (53 charges)

Altjhof has operated this foundry for many years, and is considered a fixture in the neighborhood. He enjoys dealing with dwarves, gnomes, and halflings, but he is always cautious to make sure they do not reveal the true nature of his business—dealing in gold. And he is always watchful to make certain no one steals his customers.

Altjhof trusts few people, and is not completely trusting of his gnome employees. Still, he decided he could not operate the foundry alone, and the gnomes were acceptable because they did not seem as greedy as himself.

Altjhof tends not to initiate fights, as he doesn't want to get in trouble with the Ravens Bluff law. He fears such legal involvement could expose his true business.

Geehaw, gnome specialist mage: AC 7 (ring and Dex); MV 12; HD 3 (MU 3); hp 10; #AT 1; D 1-4; SA spells; AL CG; S S; THAC0 20

Spells Carried: *Phantasmal Force* (x3) *Improved Phantasmal Force, Invisibility*

Magic Items: *Potion of healing, potion of flying, ring of protection +1*

Metkrig, gnome fighter: AC 6 (Dex); MV 12; HD 4 (F 4); hp 31; #AT 1; D 1-6+1; AL N; S S; THAC0 16

Magic Items: *Short sword +1, potion of invisibility*

Blaburd, gnome fighter: AC 7 (leather and shield); MV 12; HD 3 (F 3); hp 29; #AT 1; D 1-6+2 (Str and magic weapon); AL N; S S; THAC0 16 (adjusted)

Magic Items: *Spear +1*

Yezedred Gerlop, gnome specialist mage: AC 9; MV 12; HD 2 (MU 2); hp 8; #AT 1; D 1-6 (staff); AL CN; S S; THAC0 20

Spells Carried: *Change Self, Phantasmal Force, Ventriloquism*

Nardo, gnome fighter: AC 5 (chain); MV 9; HD 3 (F 3); hp 25; #AT 1; D 1-8+1 (Str bonus); AL CN; S S; THAC0 17 (adjusted)

Magic Items: *Potion of healing, potion of extra-healing*

George, gnome fighter: AC 5; (chain); MV 9; HD 3 (F3); hp 22; #AT 1; D 1-8; AL N; S S; THAC0 17 (adjusted)

Bold As Brass

The business is housed in the lower level of a three-story building. The second story is occupied by the businesses' proprietors; the third story is rented to a couple of barge captains who stay in Ravens Bluff between runs. The captains are working on the river, and the PCs will not be able to talk to them during this adventure.

The proprietor is Irma Schotzknee, a bold, brassy human female with a big heart and an eye for a quick sale. If the

PCs enter her shop, she will do her best to sell them something.

Bold as Brass specializes in brass statues. Irma casts the statues herself, and is especially fond of animal statues. There are a dozen different brass monkeys; a brass swordfish that serves as a letter opener; a brass porcupine with removable quills that can be used as toothpicks; a brass turtle that can double for an ashtray when the shell is flipped up; and a large collection of brass walking cane heads. Most of her wares are simply ornamental statues ranging in size from six inches to three feet tall. The prices range from a few gold pieces to several hundred gold pieces. Irma also custom makes statues, although these cost more. She is adept at working gems into statue's eyes, but the customer must supply the gems.

Irma is friendly and talks to the PCs as long as she believes she can get a sale out of them. If they buy something or place an order for a custom-made statue (they aren't required to put any money down if Irma likes them), they can learn the following information:

*Irma has been trying her hand at making very small brass objects, and she is becoming quite good at it. She has been making small brass buttons, out of a brass that shines like gold, for Dressed To The Nines. These buttons have raised designs on them, and she is quite proud of her work. She says when she gets more confidence in working on small objects she will branch out into making brass jewelry.

*Irma believes brass is the most precious metal in the world. It shines warmly, is strong enough to be made into many objects, and it feels smooth and pleasing to the touch. She considers it "every-man's mineral" because it is priced low enough to be bought by commoners, yet it can be worked into large ornamental statues that appeal to the rich.

*Irma has heard rumblings about a counterfeit operation, but doesn't know anything about it. However, she knows several merchants in Ravens Bluff are scrutinizing the gold coins they take in. Irma is confident she won't be duped by the fake coins because she knows metals so well. Irma also has heard The Vulture is really hot to capture the counterfeiters.

If the PCs were not cordial to Irma, did not profess any interest in her

wares, or implied that she had something to do with the counterfeit ring, she becomes belligerent and bolder and demands they leave. If the PCs attack Irma, they will defeat her easily. But the city watch and The Vulture's men will be quick on their heels. Irma is well-liked in the area and runs a strictly legal operation.

Irma Schotzknee: AC 10; MV 12; HD 1 (0 level); hp 4; #AT 1; D 1-6 (whatever brass statue is handy); AL NG; S M; THAC0 20

Magic Item: *Rag of polishing.* A wealthy brass fancier gave Irma this special magic item. When it is touched to a metal item no larger than a man and the command word—shine—spoken, the item becomes clean and shines like it was new. The rag can be used six times a day.

Ember Me More

The large, two-story building, houses Ember Me More on the first floor and the building proprietors on the second. The shop sells fireplace accoutrements made of iron, brass, and bronze. The wealthier customers purchase the brass and bronze items because the items appear more valuable. However, their largest trade is in iron pokers, tongs, screens, and gratings. Other items for sale include small brooms, dust pans, bellows, tinder, flint and steel, and specially-treated logs which burn twice as long as regular wood. As a side business, the brothers repair and build fireplaces.

The proprietors are Woodruff and Ashley Sweep, male human twins who inherited the business from their father. They take a great amount of pride in their work, and the business is spotless. The one-room store is rimmed with fireplaces, three of which are working fireplaces. Fireplace tools hang from the walls. The more ornate items are kept in glass cases in the center of the room. The room is warm, sometimes uncomfortably so in the summer, as there is always a fire going in one of the fireplaces.

The Sweeps are friendly and take time to talk to the PCs even if the PCs don't seem interested in buying anything. However, if the PCs appear to want to talk business, the Sweeps will be happy to discuss the virtues of having a fireplace and the differences between brass, bronze, and iron fireplace tools.

The Sweeps will admit they buy their brass tools from the gnomes who work for Althjof Brasshand. They are especially satisfied with the gnomes now because of the brass that shines like gold. The Sweeps know nothing about any counterfeit coins and appear deeply offended if the PCs accuse them of being linked to a counterfeit operation. The Sweeps, no matter what the accusations, are too polite to kick the PCs out of the shop. They let the PCs stay and accuse while they sink deeper and deeper into depression. If the PCs attack the Sweeps, the battle will be swift and perhaps disastrous, as the Sweeps have very few hit points. Violence here will bring down the city watch and results in the PCs being taken before The Vulture.

Woodruff and Ashley Sweep: AC 8 (Dex); MV 12; HD 1 (0 level); hp 6 each; #AT 1; D 1-6 (fireplace implement, such as a poker); AL NG; S M; THAC0 20

Magic items: Woodruff owns a pair of *slippers of spider climbing* which he keeps up in his room and uses when working on chimneys. Ashley has a *wand of fire lighting* (83 charges remaining). When pointed at a pile of wood, or other burnable objects, and the command words—alere flammam—are spoken, a fire starts. This can be directed at a character's equipment, which burns 1d3 rounds inflicting 2 points of damage per round. Magical equipment saves vs. magical fire to avoid.

Dressed To The Nines

A free standing, brightly painted wooden billboard showing a smartly dressed soldier standing at attention marks Dressed to the Nines, an exclusive men's clothing store and haberdashery. The entire building is spotless, and a man outside dressed in a uniform that looks exactly like the one depicted on the sign nods curtly and opens the door for you.

The doorman, Kevin Naols, will not speak with the PCs. He is allowed to exchange pleasantries with the customers, but not to speak with passersby.

The Nines caters to more affluent customers, but it sells a few brass items to those who cannot afford the better stuff. They also make uniforms to order for customers who have servants or troops to clothe. Most of the brass items are intended for use on uniforms.

The store is dark inside, but there are several backlit glass cases filled with jewelry and cufflinks, a wall full of shelves containing hats, a table with racks holding cloak pins, buttons, and brass items, and a well-lit area with a half-circle of full-length mirrors. A space behind the counter appears to hold clothing. Two doors near the mirrors probably lead to fitting rooms.

Among the brass items in stock are buttons, made for The Nines by Irma from Bold As Brass. The Nines shopkeeper, an old man named Jordan Whipt, will be snooty to the PCs because he can tell they don't have much gold to spend. If the PCs ask him or his employees about brass items, they receive a rude I-thought-as-much snort, and will be offhandedly directed toward the table.

Jordan and his two assistants, Jack and Robert, wear uniforms. The Nines is a trendy store, and uniforms never go out of style—it wouldn't do to have employees wearing outdated fashions, and it would be too expensive to dress them in the newest styles.

The Nines doesn't do much off-the-shelf business, except in hats and jewelry. Customers come in, ask for what they want, and have it made to order. Jordan keeps some nearly complete versions of the latest styles behind the counter. When a customer wants one of these, he is fitted with an incomplete garment, measured, and the garment is tailored to fit and ready by the next business day. The PCs will not get much attention while they are in the shop because Lord Charles Frederik LaVerne Blacktree the IV is in looking at cufflinks and jewelry. All the attention is going to him, and the PCs should recognize right away that he looks just like the man who hired them to get the numbered jars.

Four men hover near one of the cases. An older man in a uniform is kneeling behind the case and lifting out trays of gem-studded cufflinks. Two younger men in uniforms are busily attaching cufflinks to the fourth man's shirt. The man has curly blond hair, a faint, blond mustache, and clearly visible in the light from the case, deep brown eyes. It is Lord Merriwether Winston Sheffield-Trublood.

Lord Charles is a fop, but is good at making a show of bravado. If the PCs threaten him, or make it known that they have a grievance against him, he begins boasting.

"Now see here you ruffians, I don't know who you are, but I suggest you leave this place before I lose my temper and violate the peace of this city, something I always am loathe to do. If you hurry along quickly you might just escape the watch. I would detain you—you obviously should be arrested for something—but I'd prefer to meet you outside the walls where I can teach you manners without breaking the law and besmirching the honor of the Lord Speaker of the Advisory council. Don't let the door spank your bottoms on the way out."

Before the PCs have a chance to reply to Lord Charles, the shopkeeper breaks in:

"What!? You fools, don't you know who you're dealing with here? Get out of my shop, and out of town before you are arrested for assaulting a city official. On second thought, don't wait that long. You've just insulted Lord Charles Frederik LaVerne Blacktree the fourth, and if he forgets he's a gentleman you'll be chopped into pieces and left to bleed all over my floor, very bad for business."

Lord Charles gladly will trade threats with the PCs until the watch arrives in 1d6 + 1 rounds. If the PCs kill Lord Charles, they will be arrested, tried, and likely sent to prison for the rest of their lives. If they injure Lord Charles, they cool their heals in jail for a short time, then get bailed out. The Vulture gives them a severe tongue lashing, repeats his warning from their first meeting, and puts them back on the case.

Lord Charles Frederik LaVerne Blacktree IV:, human fighter: STR 14, INT 10, WIS 8, DEX 15, CON 12, CHA 9; HD 2 (F 2); hp 17; AC 9; AL NG; THAC0 19

Magic Items: *Dagger +1, dagger +2, gauntlets of climbing and swimming*

Lord Charles is 21 years old. He weighs 160 pounds, and stands 5′ 11″—a tall, gangly, young man.

Lord Charles is currently Lord Speaker of the Advisory Council, a body with plenty of prestige, but no real power. Most other members are elderly retired statesmen seeking comfortable sinecures. When Lord Charles deals with important matters, the Council ensures that a more experienced advisor is assigned as his assistant—the "assistant" handles the real work.

Lord Charles was elected Lord Speaker of the Advisory Council as a mark of respect for his late father, before the Council realized what a fool Charles is.

Lord Charles enjoys his position and wealth, and doesn't mind flaunting them. He is vain, lazy, foolish, and irresponsible, and believes that the other nobles are too stuffy.

Charles is a boisterous, but naive young man who has come into his inheritance prematurely. He is always bragging about his exploits as a hunter, womanizer, and well-connected politician. In fact, there is little to support his claims. If challenged on his exaggerations, he will at first become hostile, and then he will bluster and threaten the offender. If the challenger stands up to him, Charles backs down, finding some excuse to avoid unpleasantness, while trying to save face any way he can. Socially, he constantly hosts parties on his estate for his young friends, and has acquired a reputation as a playboy. The Advisory Council tolerates Charles out of respect for his father, but their patience is growing thin. Charles is on a head-on collision course with The System. Nevertheless, the city government won't tolerate any attacks on Charles by the PCs—city officials are to be respected.

Jordan, Jack, and Robert: AC 10; MV 12; HD 1 (F 0); hp 5 each; #AT 1; D 1-6 (club); AL NG; S M; THAC0 20

Lamps By Watt

This one-story building houses a store that specializes in torches, lamps, chandeliers, large light fixtures, and lanterns. The majority of the light sources will not be of interest to most adventurers, as they are too large to be comfortably carried. The light sources are primarily used to light buildings.

> The newly-painted one-story building has a lemon yellow awning stretched from its roof to the edge of the sidewalk, shading passersby. The sign hanging from the awning reads: "Lamps By Watt," and in smaller letters, "A.C. Watt, proprietor."
>
> The shop is one large room. A dozen chandeliers hang from the ceiling, each has a price tag dangling from it. One wall is taken up by large torches and sconces. Large lanterns dangle from another wall, and from another a variety of light sources hang. There are three glass cases evenly spaced in the center of the room. These are filled with wicks, oil, and other accessories. A young man busies himself arranging wicks on the top shelf. An older man, probably the proprietor, addresses you.
>
> "Welcome to Lamps By Watt. What can I do to help you."

Aaron Coleman Watt is a jovial, beaming man. He is active and dextrous, never standing completely still. Watt also is very friendly. His prices are fair, and the workmanship is excellent. The fixtures are primarily made of bronze, brass, pewter, and iron. All of the smaller brass items are exceptionally shiny and new. He is pleased with the moongold brass because it is very shiny and helps reflect the light emanating from the fixtures.

Watt is willing to spend a lot of time with the PCs—if they appear to be customers. Although he is a pleasant man, his first interest is his business. He does not care to spend time with people who have no interest in buying anything, unless the PCs mention they are trying to find a counterfeit ring.

Watt knows there are counterfeit coins in circulation. A stranger purchased one of his most costly chandeliers with the false coins. Watt also knows the false coins are made of brass, and he is suspicious that it is moongold brass. However, Watt is certain his supplier of brass fixtures is not involved in any counterfeiting operation. He has done business a long time with the gnomes. He believes they are honest and would not stoop to counterfeiting for an income.

Watt's clerk and son, Yul, is also friendly, but is not as helpful. Yul does not know anything about counterfeiters. However, Yul is the curious sort and will ask the PCs questions about counterfeiting or anything else they are willing to talk about. Yul is a little lazy and views conversing with customers as a good way to avoid work.

Aaron and Yul are in good spirits today, and they have just received another order from their best customer, Verity Overinn. Aaron and Yul know Verity as a dignified, quiet woman who conducts her business quickly and quietly. They know she runs an inn in another neighborhood, and have shipping records showing where the inn is, and showing that she has purchased a prodigious number of brass fixtures over the past three months. Neither Aaron nor Yul know what she is doing with them.

Aaron Coleman Watt: AC 6 (Dex); MV 12; HD 4 (F 4); hp 34; #AT 1; D 1-6 (lamp or large torch) or 1-8+2 (broad sword +2); AL NG; S M; THAC0 17

Magic Items: *Boots of elvenkind, ring of infravision*

Yul Watt: AC 7 (Dex); MV 12; HD 1 (F 1); hp 9; #AT 1; D 1-6 (lamp or large torch) or 1d6+3 (Str bonus); AL CG; S M; THAC0 20

Magic Items: *Potion of levitation, potion of rainbow hues*

Bullies At Five O'Clock

This encounter occurs after the PCs have visited at least two, but not more than three businesses in the neighborhood. It can come before or after "The Gnome Assault" detailed below depending on when the PCs visit Brasshand's. Verity Overinn has eyes all over this neighborhood — thugs and thieves who fence items with her or buy stolen goods from her, criminals who she allows in her safe house, and customers who buy her counterfeit coins. Some of these people noticed the PCs poking around in the neighborhood and asking too many questions. To limit any threat the PCs might pose, Verity has hired a group of thugs to beat up the PCs and order them out of the neighborhood. The thugs use brass knuckles, which Verity makes as a sideline.

The thugs pick a quiet time when the streets are nearly empty and the city watch is not in the area.

> It seems just about everyone has gone home. The only people on the street are two working class woman carrying baskets of vegetables. They seem to be in a hurry, but chat merrily as the bustle along. Their chatter turns to gasps, however when they pass an alley and two pairs of

grimy hands snatch them from the sidewalk, sending potatoes, cabbages, and carrots flying. You hear a muffled shriek and the sound of cloth tearing.

If the PCs do not fall for the ladies in distress ploy, the thugs act the part of locals strolling down the street. They quickly move up behind the PCs and attempt to push them into an alley where they can beat them up without too many people watching. If the PCs can't be pushed into the alley, the thugs fight them in the open. They are not worried. If they can keep the fight short, most of the locals won't report them. Many of the people in this neighborhood have a hard time remembering things unless someone gives them gold to improve their memories.

The thugs are not armed with any other weapons, as they do not want to call undue attention to themselves, nor do they want to kill anyone. They just want to get the PCs out of the neighborhood. While fighting, they threaten the PCs, telling them to get out of the neighborhood. The thugs' goal is to beat all the PCs into unconsciousness so they wake up in the alley and crawl to another part of the city. However, if the battle goes against them, and any thug is killed or knocked out, the remainder scatter.

These thugs are tough. If caught, they will not reveal any useful information. Each thug carries 1d10 sp and 1d4 gp. The thugs have more money than this, but they know better than to carry it with them.

Thugs (8): 2 @ AC 8 (leather), 4 @ AC 5 (leather and Dex), 2 @ AC 4 (leather and Dex); MV 12"; HD 4 (F 4); hp 2 @ 29, 4 @ 32, 2 @ 40; #AT 1; D 5 @ 1d3 (brass knuckles), 3 @ 1d3+2 (brass knuckles and Str bonus) (75% of the damage is temporary); SA because these thugs are experts with brass knuckles, there is a +5% KO chance on each successful punch; THAC0 17

Gnome Assault

This encounter should be used after the PCs leave Brasshand's and have visited one of the businesses in the neighborhood that deals in brass. Althjof Lah Brasshand is suspicious of the PCs, fearing that they are out to steal his customers. While his primary business is working with gold, he still values his brass customers—not wanting to loose any business to newcomers. He has instructed some of his employees to follow the PCs and scare them. He does not want the PCs killed, as that could bring the Ravens Bluff Constable or his force into the neighborhood.

The gnomes were quick to follow Brasshand's orders (because he pays them and because they always enjoy an opportunity to use their illusions). They have set themselves up between two buildings. Three of the gnomes are hidden in a bunch of crates in the alley. The fourth is hanging around the shadows across the street, ready to come into the alley in his *change self* image.

The gnomes involved in the operation are Geehaw, Blaburd, Metkrig, and Yezedred Gerlop.

As you walk the streets of Ravens Bluff pondering what you have learned so far, you hear an ear-wrenching screech. Looking up you see a child dangling from a set of curtains which hang out a second-story window. A large, red ball lies on the window ledge. A crowd of confused townspeople are gathering to stare at the helpless child.

The ball is real. The child is a *phantasmal force* from Geehaw. Yezedred is using *ventriloquism* to give the child a voice: "Help me. Oh please help me!" The townspeople are real. Nobody knows who the child is or how he got up there. Nobody lives on that building's second floor.

As the PCs enter the alley, the child falls. They cannot catch him. He appears to lay lifeless in the alley. However, if the PCs turn the child over, his face becomes that of a hideous monster, and he begins to claw at the PCs. The child fights for three rounds and melts into the ground. The townspeople flee when they see the transformation.

Next, Geehaw casts a second *phantasmal force,* that of stirges flying out of the window the child fell from. The stirges fly around the heads of the PCs, each one attacking once, and then flying into the sky.

Just before the stirges fly away, Yezedred casts *change self* upon himself, to make him look like the proprietor of the business the PCs just left. The proprietor runs into the alley, shouting, "What is going on? What horror have you brought down upon this neighborhood?"

While the PCs are distracted with this, Geehaw casts his *improved phantasmal force.* This illusion causes the ground to come alive. The ground takes on the horrid face of the illusion/child and begins to eat garbage, items laying in the alley, and looks like it is going after the PCs next. In a rumbling voice it says, "Get out of my neighborhood!"

At this point Geehaw casts *invisibility* on himself; he believes he can't be too cautious. Yezedred, who looks like a proprietor, tries to run out of the alley, and the other gnomes try to remain hidden among the boxes.

If the PCs catch any of the gnomes, the gnomes initially will say they were just out to have a good time. However, well-placed threats or bribes will get the gnomes to admit that they were told to scare the PCs out of the neighborhood because Brasshand is afraid they are out to steal his customers.

Refer to the Brasshand's entry for the statistics on the gnomes.

Phantasmal Stirges: AC 8; MV 3/18; HD 1+1; hp 1d3 hits; #AT 1; D 1-3; AL N; S S; THAC0 17

Child/Monster: AC 8; MV 6; HD N/A; hp N/A; #AT 2; D 1-4/1-4; AL N; S M; THAC0 17

The Overinn

The Overinn, which masquerades as a second-class inn, houses a counterfeit operation and serves as a safehouse for those who are on the run from the law or who are trying to keep a low profile. In addition, the proprietor, Verity Overinn, fences items for thieves not attached to one of the local guilds.

The Overinn is a three-story building. The first floor is the inn, the second floor is the safehouse, and the third floor is Verity's living space. A large room on the third floor is reinforced and has an iron door. This is the living quarters of her cook, an ogre. The counterfeit operation is in the basement.

The Overinn's current occupants are: Verity, who the PCs will find in the inn; her cook, who is in the kitchen; and six safehouse residents, who include two second-level thieves, three first-level thieves, and one second-level specialist wizard (enchanter).

One of the second-level thieves, Marty Beaver, is the brains behind the counterfeit operation. Marty is skilled at jewelry making. His expertise combined with Verity's greediness birthed the operation. However, Marty is considered

the lesser partner and only receives 35% of the profits.

The fencing operation is in the open, although only Verity's customers and herself know this fact. The first floor's interior walls and ceiling are covered with unusual items; there is very little blank wall space. The public perceives the items as Verity's attempt at interior decorating. However, many of the items are stolen or have been pawned, and are hanging indistinguishable amid junk.

Verity Overinn acquired the three-story building nearly a decade ago because a favorite uncle left it to her—after she coerced him into bequeathing her something. The uncle mysteriously died soon after the will was written. Verity never has run a legitimate business in the building, and she is immensely proud of herself for never attracting the attention of the city watch, city officials, or The Vulture. Verity's greatest asset is her greed. The fighter-thief lives for making more money and delights in finding ways to sidestep Ravens Bluff's legal system. She has no sense of morals or honor and only helps those who use her safehouse service because they pay her. She struck upon the idea of starting a counterfeiting operation when one of the thieves in the safehouse grumbled about being unable to duplicate the images on Ravens Bluff's coins. Verity kept her eyes out for an individual with that talent, and when one day such a man came looking for a place to hide, she lured him into her scheme.

Verity makes her counterfeit coins from the moongold candleholders she buys from Lamps By Watt. No one has thought anything of Verity's increasing orders for the candleholders. If anyone asks questions about it, she replies there are a lot of fights in her inn, and the candleholders get damaged or broken.

If the PCs watch The Overinn before going inside, they see a few fast-moving individuals go inside. No groups of people enter the inn. The building's exterior obviously is in need of repair, but it is not the worst looking building in the block.

If the PCs investigate the inn, read the following:

> The Overinn is worn, an old building that has not been taken care of properly. Still, it is not the worst building on the street. A large faded sign in the shape of a skillet hangs above the front door and reads: "The Overinn." The curtains at the windows probably once were black, but the sun has turned them a deep, splotched gray. The windows are dirty, making it difficult to see inside, but a warm glow pokes out through clear patches in the window.
>
> The building's interior is a junkman's dream. A plethora of old and unusual items hang from the walls and the ceiling, testimony to the proprietor's crude attempt at interior decorating. A broken wagon wheel hanging from the ceiling and filled with candles serves as the inn's chandelier. Worn signs are plastered on the walls and poke out between some of the pots, pans, lanterns, and feathered face masks. One of the signs says, "This Way To The Champions' Games." A faded banner above the bar says, "Congratulations Charles Oliver O'Kane." A few animal heads hang crookedly on the walls; the largest is a moose head, which is missing a glass eye. Candles on tables and on ledges on the walls also help to light the inside. It is a small inn. A massive oak bar lines one side of the room, behind it is a plain-looking woman who spits on the bar and runs a rag over the top of it to shine it. There are a half-dozen barstools; two of them are occupied. And there is one large, round table near the wall opposite the bar.
>
> The woman finishes shining the bar, stuffs the rag in her pocket, and looks up at you. "What can I get you sirs and ladies? Our special plate of the day? Or maybe just something to drink?"

Verity has never seen the PCs before but knows immediately they are not looking for the safehouse or to purchase counterfeit coins. Such customers immediately come to the bar, hand her a gold coin, and give her the password. However, Verity does not immediately attempt to chase them away. Always out to earn money, she is willing to sell them food and drinks.

If the PCs ask about items in the room, describe oil lamps, metal sculptures, paintings with and without frames, gaudy beads, boots, a few weapons, several kitchen implements, wall hangings, clear and colored glass figurines, broken musical instruments, hats, belt buckles, gardening tools, etc. Other items include barrel heads nailed to the wall, an old ladder, empty flour sacks, and glass ornaments. A fisherman's net is strung across half the ceiling, and several small items are in it, including fishing lures, shells, an oar, miniature wooden boats, etc. About one-fifth of the items are in good condition and valuable, however the PCs would not be able to tell this unless they stood a few feet from the items in question and had a good light source. A few of the items are brass, but only the candleholders in the room are made of the moongold brass. There are some magic items on the walls: a *trident +1, dagger +1, short sword +2* and *shield +1, missile attracter.*

The value of the good objects is 19,900 gp. The brass items (other than the candleholders) include brass knuckles, brass belt buckles, a brass walking stick head, and a big brass earring.

If the PCs begin to poke around the items, Verity gets very upset, ordering them away and telling them, "There'll be no more fights in here. I'm tired of dealing with you hooligans who want to ruin my inn." Verity continues to act like the PCs are vandals. If the PCs persist, one of the customers at the bar goes upstairs to get the safehouse residents. Eventually, a fight will break out. See **The Fight** section below.

If the PCs ask Verity questions, she pretends to be friendly and plays the part of a courteous waitress. She does her best to duck the questions with, "I don't know" and "Hmmm, that's interesting." If they ask her about the brass items hanging from the wall, she replies that the decorations make the place look homey and that she has acquired the items through the decade she has operated the place. If they ask her about her orders of candleholders, she tells them many get broken in the fights that occur in the inn and she has to replace them. (Smart PCs who look at the inn to note the condition of its contents should be told the furniture is all old, but intact, and everything seems to be in average condition. In addition, the PCs can note some carvings in the table, such as "Butch and Marilyn forever." The date beneath the name is three years ago.) Verity elaborates about the rough group of clients she has; people who are out of work, drunk barge workers, husbands who have been kicked out of their homes, and paupers looking for handouts.

If the PCs mention counterfeiting, Verity becomes upset, saying she knows there are a few fake coins going around

in Ravens Bluff. She says she got one herself and has been very careful ever since about the money she takes in. If the PCs accuse her of being involved in counterfeiting, she motions for one of the patrons at the bar to go upstairs. If not stopped, he brings down the safehouse residents, who try to deal with the PCs. See **The Fight**, below. If stopped, Verity screams and the residents come down anyway.

If the PCs try to get a room at her inn, Verity tells them that unfortunately all the rooms are filled right now.

Any food the PCs order here is overcooked or undercooked and will not have a lot of flavor. The special today is boiled potatoes and veal. The meat is not veal; it is horsemeat. She gets dead or downed horses from a local breeder and gives them to her ogre cook. Of course, Verity and the safehouse residents eat much better food. The wine and ale is good, but overpriced.

Verity does her best to get the PCs to leave. She tells them her inn is small, and once they are done eating and drinking they need to leave so the table can be occupied by other customers.

The Fight

The fight can be started in a variety of ways. If the PCs acted like customers, but stayed too long, the safehouse residents come downstairs and attack.

The NPC combatants include: Verity, her ogre cook, and the six safehouse residents. The ogre initially stands in the kitchen doorway and hurls potatoes (1-2 hp of temporary damage, 5% chance to stun opponents). Verity strikes to subdue (-4 attack roll penalty, 1/2 damage, 1/2 of that temporary), as she doesn't want to be found guilty of murder. If the ogre falls victim to a *sleep spell,* Verity revives him with her *oil of disenchantment.*

If the residents are drawn to the fight by a disturbance, such as Verity screaming, they spend two rounds getting organized and rush down the stairs into the fray, supported by the wizard who casts a *sleep spell* on the party. If they can come quietly, the higher level thieves creep down the stairs, hide in the shadowy inn, and clobber the PCs from behind. Once the party notices the first group of thieves, the remaining thieves, supported by the mage, attack.

After the PCs defeat Verity and company, they can scour the building and find the counterfeiting operation. There are 5,000 counterfeit coins in a large bin, just waiting to be bought. Other items in the basement include a furnace used to melt the brass, metalworking tools, a hundred bars of lead, and two dozen brass candleholders. There is nothing of value in the rooms upstairs.

Verity Overinn: AC 2 (bracers and Dex); MV 12; HD (F4/T5); hp 40; #AT 1; D 1d6+3 (Str and magic weapon); AL CN; S M; THAC0 15 (adjusted)

Thieving Abilities

PP	OL	FT	MS	HS	DN	CW	RL	BS
75	40	35	50	25	35	60	20	x3

Magic Items: *Bracers of defense AC 6, oil of disenchantment, short sword +2*

Cookie, the ogre: AC 5; MV 9; HD 4+1; hp 25; #AT 1; D 1-3 (potato), 1-6 (skillet), 1-8 (meat cleaver), or 1-10 (claw); AL CE; S L; THAC0 17

Marty Beaver, thief: AC 6 (Dex); MV 12; HD 2 (T 2); hp 12; #AT 1; D 1-6 (short sword); AL N; S M; THAC0 20

Thieving Abilities

PP	OL	FT	MS	HS	DN	CW	RL	BS
25	55	40	20	15	30	60	—	x2

Jonah Salt, thief: AC 6 (Dex); MV 12; HD 2 (T 2); hp 10; #AT 1; D 1-8+1 (Str bonus); AL NE; S M; THAC0 19 (adjusted)

Thieving Abilities

PP	OL	FT	MS	HS	DN	CW	RL	BS
25	25	70	35	15	15	60	15	x2

Maynard Lenowsky, thief: AC 6 (Dex); MV 12; HD 1 (T 1); hp 6; #AT 1; D 1-6 (short sword); AL NE; S M; THAC0 20

Thieving Abilities

PP	OL	FT	MS	HS	DN	CW	RL	BS
35	35	20	30	25	25	60	10	x2

Lenny Molkovitz, thief: AC 6 (Dex); MV 12; HD 1 (T 1); hp 8 (Con bonus); #AT 1; D 1d8 +1 (Str bonus); AL CE; S M; THAC0 19 (adjusted)

Thieving Abilities

PP	OL	FT	MS	HS	DN	CW	RL	BS
25	25	10	30	25	25	90	—	x2

Boris Mossroses Jr., thief: AC 5 (Dex, ring); MV 12; HD 1 (T 1); hp 6; #AT 1; D 1-4+1 (weapon); AL CN; S M; THAC0 19 (adjusted)

Thieving Abilities

PP	OL	FT	MS	HS	DN	CW	RL	BS
45	45	30	20	15	15	60	—	x2

Magic Items: *dagger +1, ring of protection +1*

Sheena Bullwacker, enchanter: AC 7 (Dex); MV 12; HD 3 (MU 3); hp 12; #AT 1; D 1-6 (staff); AL NE; S M; THAC0 20

Spells: *Charm Person, Sleep, Taunt, Scare, Tasha's Uncontrollable Hideous Laughter*

Magic Items: *Potion of Gaseous Form, Oil of Slipperiness*

The Aftermath

If the PCs defeat Verity and her entourage, The Vulture congratulates them and says they are "paid up" with his office. Because of The Vulture's *ring of truth* and his other abilities he will be able to tell what the PCs lifted from The Overinn. The majority of the items in the inn are stolen, and The Vulture will not let the PCs take them.

What the PCs can have from the inn is: *short sword +2, trident +1, dagger +1,* and 6,400 gp worth of unclaimed brass, gold, and silver items. If the PCs make no attempt to claim any of the treasure, they will be awarded 3,000 gp for the capture of the safehouse residents and Verity. ❑

It Takes One to Play One

Report on a Scientific Method of Character Choice

Translated* by Fran Hart

*From obscure, multi-syllabic jargon.

Professor Frank T Furianons, noted scholar, professor emeritus, and consultant to the stars, has just completed an exhaustive study of fantasy role-players. This study focused on why certain types of people—who engage in certain behaviors over certain periods of time—are more likely to pick certain character classes while engaging in certain fantasy role-playing situations, given that all factors influencing character choice are certainly the same, as far as can be ascertained.

This study was conducted using the emperical observational methodological factor system of method survey. In layman's terms, this means Professor Furianons spent copious amounts of time dressed in black, sitting in dark corners, observing fantasy role-playing games and gamers. He also spent a great deal of time sifting through the garbage at gamers' houses, a cross-check method of trashiological socio-metric analytical survey. This innovative technique of cross reference factors out any spurious ambivalent findings and probably will win the professor a Nobel prize in the field of garbology and a good shot at the guest slot on one of the late-night talk shows.

The professor is willing to share his findings with the world, so that you, too, can learn to predict what type of character any given person will choose to play, simply by observing the person's habits and patterns of behavior. A detailed copy of the computer generated statistical analysis is on reserve in the libraries of many major learning institutions around the world and is available direct by writing the professor and enclosing one crisp, unmarked sawbuck.

On predicting Character Choice by Individuals Engaged in Fantasy Role-Playing: A Method of Determination

Original Text by Frank T Furianons, M.GN., D.B.S., Ph DR, R.P.G.R, and T.S.R. In.

Bards: People who play bards usually are the people who wear lampshades and do Elvis imitations at parties. They are rarely invited back a second time. People who play bards can do a lot of damage to rugs.

Wizards: Many wizard players are engineers—or pretend to be. They enjoy mumbling and shrieking and waving their arms around like drunken, geriatric traffic cops. They also like to play with garden hoses and have large water bills. These are the people who spit when they talk and leave crumbs in the binding of your *Dungeon Masters Guide.*

Illusionists: People who play illusionists are sneaky and have nicknames like "Stinky" or "Goofy" or "Scooter." They wrap last year's Christmas presents in new paper and give them to their friends this year. They have sweaty hands and love putting loads in cigarettes. These people send away for items advertised in the backs of comic books.

Paladins: These people like patent leather shoes, MUZAK in elevators, reruns of *Mr. Ed,* and movies about juvenile delinquents who get punished. They usually got As in everything except P.E. and Drivers' Education. They read the paper from front to back instead of starting with the comics or the sports or *Dear Abby.*

Thieves: People who play thieves should not be trusted alone in your house because they will re-arrange all your furniture and laugh loudly. When they come to play, they will sit in your favorite easy chair, consume all your drinks, and always investigate the contents of your medicine cabinet. They never put your records back into the right album cover.

Monks: These people will end up carrying shopping bags later in life. People who play monks learn things like how to play the *William Tell Overture* by tapping pencils on their teeth while sitting in study hall. They like to play with rubber bands.

Barbarians: Many people who play barbarians have bad table manners and eat 20-dollar steaks with catsup. They also are fond of pork and beans and anything that can be eaten with their fingers. They sleep with old army blankets on their beds and have pet whetstones. When they go to the beach, people who play barbarians usually swim out too far and the lifeguard has to come get them.

Assassins: These folks wear a lot of black and like to read other people's diaries. Their brothers and sisters wish they would go someplace far away to live—preferably Mars. Their parents contribute generously to trust funds for space exploration. This type of person will take a bite out of a chocolate candy and put it back into the box. They sign things with their initals and like to tear the comics and *Dear Abby* out of the paper so nobody else can read them.

Rangers: These people like raccoons. People who play rangers often fantasize about flying and have usually broken 10 or more bones. Their favorite food is chocolate-covered peanuts (which they never would find in a forest if they were real rangers). They sleep with lots of stuffed animals who tell them secrets no one else in the world can understand.

Clerics: You can easily recognize this type, because if you ask one of them for an aspirin, he has a bottle, along with chewable antacid tablets, adhesive bandages, and a thermometer. They often can be found at the scene of car wrecks and fires. They like to be useful, but usually end up stepping in the potato salad at picnics. These people attract ants and chew on napkins when they are nervous.

Druids: People who play druids always have great science fair projects and usually don't know what day of the month it is. They wear broken watches and chew gum loudly. They often can be found holding up long lines at amusement parks while they ask silly ques-

tions about the map or driving the wrong way down one-way streets.

Fighters: Many people who play fighters grew up in homes with a lot of plastic freezer bags. They stare blankly if you mention meditation, cosmic consciousness, or the benefits of good personal hygiene; they nod and grunt enthusiastically if you mention *Sgt. Rock* comics, *Captain Kangaroo,* or pizza. These people are secret needlepointers and like to fake being sick. Most people who play fighters know a lot about water balloons and never read the paper, not even the comics or *Dear Abby.*

Dungeon Masters: While not a player class, it does take a certain type of person to function as dungeon master. Dungeon masters are very well read, because they borrow your books and never return them. They go to movies so they can loudly announce to the entire theater what is going to happen next. They give their cars names, but often forget the names of family members. They like to read the paper before you do and tell you about it. Dungeon masters do things like stick straws in their teeth and pretend they are walruses or put orange peels in their mouths and smile. Never trust a dungeon master.

Professor Furianons also has studied why certain people tend to play certain races, but has not released his findings on this subject except to say — emphatically—"People who play kender should be shot. Immediately." ❑

With Great Power

Continued from page 9

Wheels has not let his handicap affect his outlook on life. He considers life precious. His father was killed by robbers, who Wheels tracked down. However, the young man was unable to kill the murderer, even though he wanted revenge.

Slippery Sam Weltsmerz

F	A	S	E	R	I	P
EX	RM	GD	EX	GD	IN	RM
(20)	(30)	(10)	(20)	(10)	(40)	(30)

Health: 80
Karma: 80
Popularity: 5/0 outside the Bronx
Resources: 5 (TY)

Powers: Slippery Sam was an expert at moving quietly, even in the dark. His favorite tactic was to slip behind an opponent and surprise him. Sam also was good at climbing walls and blending in with crowds. These abilities operated at a Remarkable power rank.

Background: As a child, Sam was good at hiding and sneaking. He also learned to be an expert con man, able to charm nearly anyone if given a chance. He worked as a spy for the pack and served as the group's trickster, always ready to crack a joke or make a coy comment. Sam was killed while saving a young boy. ❑

The Brothers Galgolar Pawnshop

Continued from page 13

In addition, Malachi charges individuals he considers gullible or people he thinks are too honest higher interest rates for loans (up to twice the normal rate). However, he will only do this if he is sure the customers are just passing through Ravens Bluff. He records the loan at normal rates and keeps the difference for himself.

Malachi spends much of his time keeping his illegal activities secret from his brother. He is quite stealthy and uses his *ring of chameleon power* to good effect—mostly to keep track of his twin. Malachi knows that his brother would have no second thoughts about turning him in if he discovered the corruption Malachi is fostering in the name of the Brothers Galgolar. ❑

Lords of the Manor A calm moment for HQ staffers Skip Williams (standing) and Chris Schon.

Grand Masters players Robert Farnsworth (center) and Tom Prusa gaze at the camera while Don Bingle (background) role-plays his heart out.

Who? Me?

Recalling Origins '89

by Gary Haynes

It wasn't until I wiped the remnants of a good 24-hour sleep from my eyes that I had time to reflect on Origins '89 held in July at the Los Angeles Airport Hilton.

I was in charge of the RPGA™ Network HQ at Origins and was responsible for coordinating all the Network's tournaments.

Going to a convention to participate in a role-playing game, board game, or other event can be a fantastic experience when the judge is good. And there were many good judges at Origins. I used to do that—play.

But one day you try your hand at judging a game at a convention, and you learn to appreciate the people behind the screen. I've done that, too—judge, even at this Origins.

After judging or writing tournaments for a number of conventions, you decide to organize several tournaments at a local convention, and you must set out to find friends and acquaintances to judge the tournament sessions for you. Only then do you begin to appreciate the task of coordinators—especially when your friends say they are not overly anxious to judge events they want to play in. I've had my share of coordinating, but so have other volunteers.

After a while you find that it really isn't that difficult to do. But it leads to other things—a phone call, a knock at the door, or a letter in the mail from a convention, gaming company, or Network HQ. This message says that the HQ staff has heard how organized you are at pulling together an event, and they want you to coordinate a large amount of them at an upcoming convention.

Well, now, you say to yourself. This is different. Your enthusiasm is overwhelming. You, *yes you,* have been selected to do this important task, and they have confidence that you are the right person for the job. Without a thought you wholeheartedly accept this position and enthusiastically set out to find a group of individuals for the judge positions, not knowing what destiny really has in store for you and forgetting how difficult it was just to coordinate one event.

That's exactly what happened to me at Origins '89.

I was provided with mailing lists and game schedules, and I set out to recruit my legion of volunteers to work the trenches of Origins '89. But what began as a seemingly easy task with a mailing list of about 500 members turned out to be a seemingly impossible thing to accomplish. Some judges cancelled at the last moment; other potential judges decided to play in the events.

However, somehow at the convention everything came together (did I really say that?), and the events were more of a success than I thought possible.

Oh, there were a few problems. I apologize to all the players who were either misinformed or misled by the Sunday starting time for the final rounds, which was one hour earlier than the other days' morning events. Some people missed their events, and therefore missed a chance at placing in the tournament.

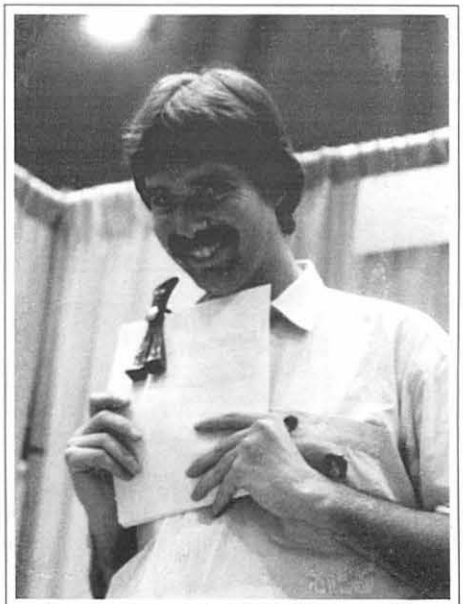
But when it comes right down to it, through all the Grenlorn defenders, Snack Dragons, Ghostrighters, exploding fireballs, cooshee purses, and more events than I have room to mention, I am certain that the players and judges enjoyed themselves.

I want to take the time to thank my judges who devoted their time to reading what was either a 35-page one-round, 73-page two-round, or 100-page three-round tournament. The group also scored tournaments, listened to players' problems, and performed other tasks that weren't in their original "job descriptions." They showed a great deal of professionalism.

The staff and judges consisted of Anthony Ragan, Walter Johnson, Timothy Fischer, Mike Soto, Eric Gadal, Martin Hauge, Marcus Pregent, Walter Milliken, Dave Argall, Chris McGuigan, and Adam Horry. I appreciate all the time you invested, and I'm looking forward to working with you in the future. I'd also like to give a special thanks to Steve Shambaugh who managed to judge a total of seven of the 10 time slots at the convention.

Another contingent of judges have my deepest thanks of all. This group flew from the midwest to play in the events, but ended up relinquishing that opportunity because I needed them to judge. They are: Jay "Yes, a fireball is 33 squares, WOOSH" Tummelson, Linda "Please don't make me judge another feature" Bingle, Jim "Sure I can stay awake to judge a final round . . . zzzzzzz. . . ." Wade, and Don "I'll run another Teenagers From Outer Space game for you, Jean" Bingle. Don ran two back-to-back unscheduled T.F.O.S. sessions just so some players would have something to do. And Jay stepped in one evening and ran a one-round Network tournament for a group of players scheduled in a non-Network game, the scheduled judge never showed. These judges went beyond any call of duty. I'd also like to thank our fearless leader Jean "Maybe next time I can go to Disneyland" Rabe, and Harold Johnson, who found out how good hamburgers can taste by the side of the hotel swimming pool.

Final thanks go to Jeff Albanese, Mike and Stephanie Mullen, and all the organizers of LA Origins for the opportunity to be a presence at the convention, all the help they provided, and the room they assigned for Network HQ, which was large, clean, and almost always filled with dedicated Network members. ❑



Gary in action at the GEN CON® game fair.

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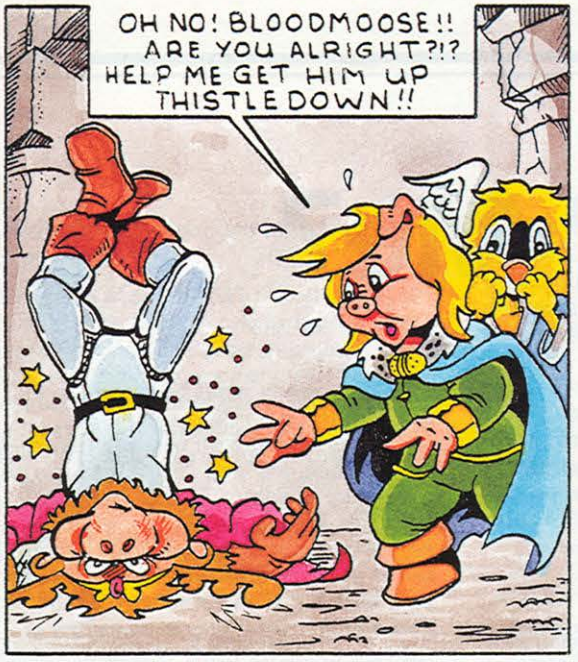

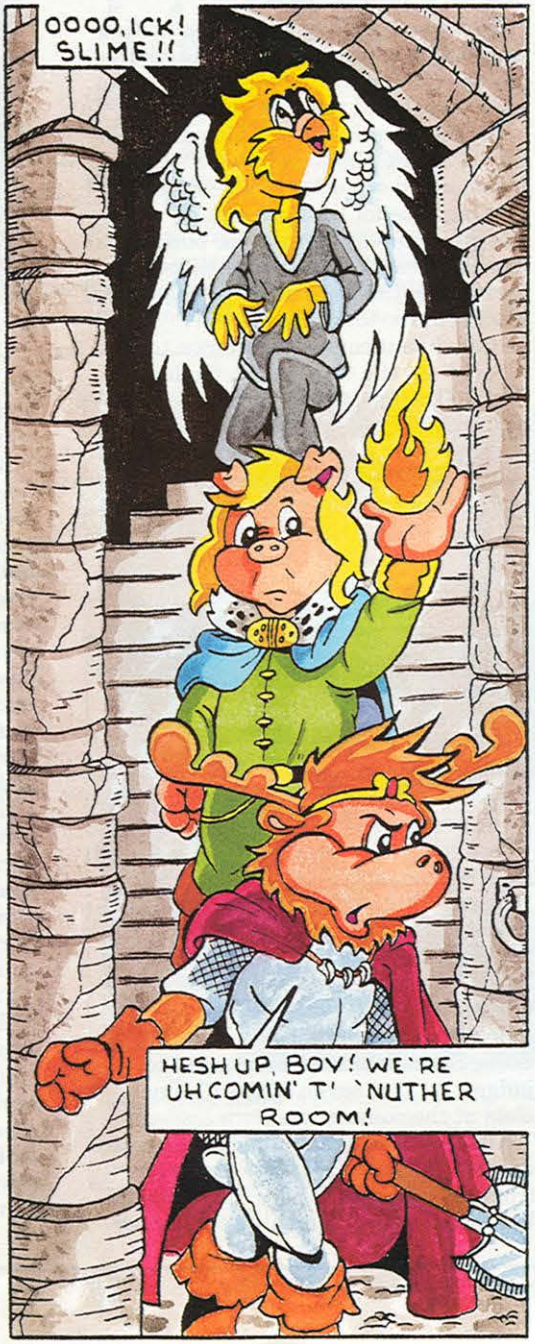

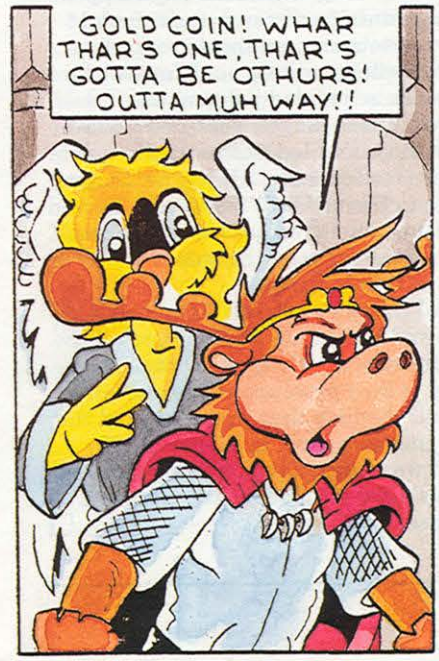

An Old Favorite Returns to Southeastern Wisconsin

Winter Fantasy 1990

January 5th-7th
The Ramada Airport — Milwaukee, WI

Winter Fantasy 1990 is sponsored by the RPGA™ Network.

Featuring Network-sanctioned events:

AD&D® Game Grand Masters
AD&D Game Masters
AD&D Game Feature
AD&D Game Benefit Tournament
MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ Game Feature Tournament
TOP SECRET/SI™ Game Tournament
Paranoia
And Others

Gamers don't live by dice alone, so we also are offering Saturday morning breakfast at 7:00 AM for the paltry sum of $7.50. (Gaming starts promptly at 8:30.) And on Sunday we offer brunch and a Network Members meeting. Brunch is served at noon, meeting to follow. Cost for the brunch is $10.00.

A writer's seminar, hosted by the POLYHEDRON™ Newszine's editorial staff will be held late Saturday afternoon. Bring your ideas and manuscripts for Newszine articles and tournaments.

Admission at the door for the weekend is $15.00 (plus meal fees). Discount Pre-registration for Network Members Only is $10.00 before November 1st, 1989. (Pre-registration for non-members is $12.00.)

All gaming is free — except the benefit tournament, which requires a $5.00 donation. Games are available on site on a first come, first served basis. Limited Pre-registration for games is available to Network Members. The fee is $2.00 for the weekend. Your $2.00 guarantees you four games of your choice, indicate choices on the form below.

Rooms at the Ramada cost $56.00 a night for double occupancy. For reservations call the Ramada at (414) 764-5300. Be sure to mention Winter Fantasy.

WINTER FANTASY 1990 PRE-REGISTRATION FORM **Membership No.** _____

- ○ **Network Member Pre-registration ($10.00)**
- ○ **Saturday Breakfast ($7.50)**
- ○ **Non Member Pre-registration ($12.00)**
- ○ **Sunday Brunch ($10.00)**
- ○ **Network Member Game Pre-registration ($2.00 for four games. indicate choices below)**

AD&D Games

○ **Grand Masters** ○ **Masters** ○ **Feature** ○ **Benefit ($5.00 donation)**

○ **MARVEL SUPER HEROES Game** ○ **TOP SECRET/SI Game** ○ **PARANOIA Game**

Name: _____

Address _____

_____

_____

Send convention registration to: Winter Fantasy 1990, PO Box 515, Lake Geneva, WI 53147
Enclose a check or money order for the appropriate amount. Do not send cash.

A Special Offer

For Network Members

Here at HQ we are proud of the Newszine, but we've got:

Too Many Back Issues

Our colleagues in The Mail Order Hobby Shop are hinting that the Newszine is wearing out its welcome. The Newszine has a long and colorful history (okay, some issues were black and white), all well illustrated on the hobby shop's shelves. The staff at the shop wants to use that space for—more Newszines. Grab a piece of Network history before more recent editions crowd it out. For a limited time, Network members can buy back issues for $1.00 off the list price, and an additional $1.00 off the total sale price of any six Newszines. For this offer only, shipping and handling fees (normally pro-rated) are a flat $3.00. (Sorry, Canadian and Overseas members must pay normal shipping fees, see Mail Order Hobby Shop Catalog. The special shipping rate is not available for orders which include merchandise not listed on this form.)

Use this form or a legible copy to take advantage of this offer. **The regular member discount does not apply to sale back issues and already is included on the other merchandise listed on this form.**

Some New Things

We are pleased to announce the arrival of two new RPGA™ Network products:

The POLYHEDRON™ Newszine Introductory Issue (POLYINT): This special Newszine edition is now included in new membership kits. It features advice on forming gaming clubs, a *New Rogues Gallery* entry with an unusual group of characters for the AD&D® Game, a *Living City* entry, an AD&D Game module which was used as a Grand Masters tournament, and more. Price: ($3.00)

The Gateway to the Living City Adventure Pack (R8908M): The gates of the Living City are open at last. Come inside and look around. You'll learn about the city's not-so-glorious past, meet the officials who have made the city thrive and grow, get a taste of city justice, and meet a host of new personalities. The 64-page module has a color cover and includes a poster/map of the city's buildings and streets. Price: $8.95 (Members only, R8908M) or $9.95 (Non Members, R8908)

Name: _____
(Please Print)

Address: _____
(Street/Box)

_____
(City and State)

_____
(Zip)

Membership Number: _____

Method of Payment: (US Funds Only)
Check ☐ Money Order ☐
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Shipping & Handling: 3.00

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#47	($2.00)	_____
#48	($2.00)	_____

New Items

Introductory Issue	($2.70)	_____
Gateway to the Living City Adventure Pack	($8.05)	_____

Conventions

Armistice Con '89, November 11-12
This convention will offer wargaming, role-playing, miniatures, and board games of all types. The convention will be held at the Horizon Activities Center in North Olmsted, OH. Hours are 9 a.m. Saturday to 6 p.m. Sunday—33 straight hours of gaming. Exhibit hours are 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday. Registration fees are $12 for the weekend, $7 for one day. For more information call 216-779-6536 during business hours or write: Horizon Center, Armistice Con '89, 30395 Loraine Rd, North Olsmtead, OH 44070.

Con-Trary, November 11-12
Springfield, MA is the site of this two-day gaming event, which is host to two one-round AD&D® game feature events. For more information write: Chris Turkel. P.O. Box 585 Lee, MA 01238 or call 413-448-8071.

PentaCon V, November 11
Come to the Grand Wayne Center in downtown Fort Wayne, IN for gaming, dealers and manufacturers, dioramas and vignettes, door prizes, a flea market, and a painting competition. Gaming will include Battetech, Champions, Darkus Thel, the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game, Star Trek, Star Wars, Twilight 2000, and more. For more information please send an SASE to: N.I.G.A., PentaCon V, P.O. Box 11146, Fort Wayne, IN 46856.

UMF-Con, November 11-12
Revive the spirit of Halloween! This role-playing and wargaming convention will be held at the Student Center of the University of Maine at Farmington, ME. Expect miniatures, AD&D® games, TOP SECRET® games, Diplomacy, board games, and contests, We also plan another murder mystery. Admission is $5 a day and $2 a game. For more information please send an SASE to: Table Gaming Club, c/o Student Information, Student Center, 5 South St, Farmington, ME 04938.

Classifieds

Massachusetts I'm looking for gamers in the Fall River, MA area. I'm also looking for pen pals who live in Wisconsin. Eric Negron, 94 Bushee Rd. Swansea, MA 02777.

New Jersey Role-playing Fans: The Dungeon Master's Guild of Edison, NJ is looking for more players and GMs for the AD&D® game, Warhammer, or ANY RPG. For more information, call Andy Cogswell at 201-494-5417 or 210-494-8278.

North Carolina Wanted: RPGA™ Network members to form official Network club. Contact: Dave Hill, P.O. Box 21003, Greensboro, NC 27420.

Ohio Wanted: Someone who lives in the Wellington or Oberlin area to start a club for the AD&D game or D&D® game. Write Jake Millspaw, 18123 Quarry Rd., Wellington, OH 44090.

Ohio Wanted: Serious DM for an AD&D game campaign. Pereferably willing to use the AD&D® 2nd Edition game and the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ Fantasy Setting. Call 419-396-6577 after 4 pm. Ask for Jason.

Pennsylvania Help! Are there any AD&D game players in or near Allentown? I play the AD&D game and I am willing to learn others. If there are any players out there please contact: Josh Duckworth, 1227 North Main St., Allentown, PA 18104.

Pennsylvania I am new to the Philadelphia area. I am an experienced AD&D game, Stormbringer, and Traveller player/GM desperately looking for a group of gamers or Network club needing new members. I'm willing to learn other games. Please contact Larry Hoffman at: 225 Dunbar Ln., Apt. O, Horsham, PA 19044 or call 215-443-7341 before 10:00 pm.

Virginia Twenty-year-old male gamer seeks other players and game masters. I play the AD&D game, MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ game, STAR FRONTIERS® game, Knight Hawks game, and the Palladium Role-Playing Game. I am willing to learn other games. I would like to meet at the west end of Richmond at least once a week. Carle E. Boothe, P.O. Box 101, Goochland, VA 23063. Phone 804-457-2413 between 6 and 10 p.m.

Virginia I'm looking for an imaginative pal who likes to write stories and create worlds. Let's share experiences. Serious friends only. Victoria Holmes. P.O. Box 446, Scottsville, VA 24590.

General I'm looking for used RPGs at low prices. If you've got GAMMA WORLD® game, Star Wars, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, TOP SECRET/S.I.™ game, or the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ Campaign Setting, contact: Ian Eller, RD #2, Box 161-B, Upper Blade, Eddy, PA 18972.

General DRAGON® Magazines—massive collection of mint condition back issues from #1 to current. I'm selling these off as well as a large collection of role playing related items, both new and used, at bargain prices. Send self-addressed-stamped-envelope to receive my price list. Write to: Tim Stabosz, 45 Country Manor Lane, Orland Park, IL 60462, or call 312-361-2999.

General Sixteen-year-old boy seeks correspondence with teenagers ages 14–17—ladies welcome. My interests are the AD&D game, Douglas Adams, Espionage, Science Fiction, and Fantasy. John Furmanske, 141 Campbell Ave., Yorkville, NY 13495.

General Wanted: Imagine Magazine issue #24 in mint condition. Send your price to the Dragonriders, care of R. L. Solo, P.O. Box 72018, Roselle, IL 60172.

Attention Fluffy Questers If you played in or judged the final round of "The Last Fluffy Quest" at the GEN CON® game fair this year, please contact me. Fluffy's fate is in your hands! Rick Reid, P.O. Box 389, Commanche, IA 52730.

❑

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